

# Arlington County Government 2020 Annual Report

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY MANAGER



DECEMBER 2020

# ARLINGTON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

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*Arlington will be a diverse and inclusive world-class urban community with secure, attractive residential and commercial neighborhoods where people unite to form a caring, learning, participating, sustainable community in which each person is important.”*

— Arlington County Board

## 2020 ARLINGTON COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS

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Libby Garvey, Chair



Matt de Ferranti, Member



Katie Cristol, Member



Christian Dorsey, Member



Takis P. Karantonis, Member

## Erik Gutshall- In Memoriam

*(April 28, 1970-April 16, 2020)*



Arlington County Board Vice-Chair Erik Gutshall served the Arlington community as a volunteer, a youth soccer coach, a small business owner, a Planning Commissioner and a County Board Member. Erik died after a brief battle with brain cancer on April 16, 2020.

Erik won election to the County Board in November 2017. He made his mark as an advocate for sustainability, affordable housing, inclusion and development that was both sustainable and of benefit to the entire community. He possessed a knack for asking the questions that constituents most wanted answered from the dais during Board Meetings.

At its April 18, 2020 Meeting, the County Board observed a moment of silence before sharing their thoughts about Erik's passing and about the life he had lived. They recalled his devotion to the Arlington community, his quick wit and sense of humor, and most of all, his love for his family. They offered their sympathy and support to his wife, Renee, and their three children. In the words of Board Chair Libby Garvey, "We are heartbroken. Erik loved being a Board member and loved Arlington. His death is a loss for us all, but especially for his family. Our thoughts and prayers are with them."

The founder and president of Clarendon Home Services, Erik became an active community volunteer shortly after moving to the Lyon Park neighborhood in 1995. He served on the Board of Doorways for Women and Families and on the Facilities Committee of Western Presbyterian Church. He coached youth soccer, and served on the PTA. All three of his children attend Arlington Public Schools.

As chair of the Planning Commission, and during his service on the Transportation Commission, Erik supported strong public engagement and thoughtful planning with the goal of ensuring private development contributed to Arlington's quality of life and mitigation of any potential negative impacts.

During his time on the County Board, Erik served as Vice-Chair of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government's Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee.



*Erik Gutshall with fellow Board Members Matt de Ferranti and Christian Dorsey.*

He also served as a Director of the Virginia Association of Counties, (VaCO), and chaired their Economic Development and Planning Steering Committee.

Erik earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science from James Madison University and his Master of Arts degree in Environmental Resource Policy from The George Washington University. He was a member of Leadership Arlington Class of 2009.



*Erik Gutshall with fellow Board Members (left-right) Katie Cristol, Matt de Ferranti, and Libby Garvey*

## ARLINGTON COUNTY GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP

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**MARK SCHWARTZ**  
COUNTY MANAGER

### OFFICE OF THE COUNTY MANAGER

**SAMIA BYRD**  
CHIEF RACE & EQUITY OFFICER

**MICHELLE COWAN**  
**JAMES SCHWARTZ**  
**SHANNON FLANAGAN-WATSON**  
DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGERS

**GURJIT CHIMA**  
**BRYNA HELFER**  
ASSISTANT COUNTY MANAGERS

**LYNNE PORFIRI**  
CHIEF OF STAFF

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### DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS

**JACK BELCHER**  
TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

**GREG EMANUEL**  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

**MARCY FOSTER**  
HUMAN RESOURCES

**ANITA FRIEDMAN**  
HUMAN SERVICES

**DIANE KRESH**  
LIBRARIES

**MARIA MEREDITH**  
MANAGEMENT & FINANCE

**AARON MILLER**  
PUBLIC SAFETY  
COMMUNICATIONS &  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

**CHARLES PENN** (*Acting*)  
POLICE

**DAVID POVLITZ**  
FIRE

**JANE RUDOLPH**  
PARKS & RECREATION

**TELLY TUCKER**  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**CLAUDE WILLIAMSON**  
COMMUNITY PLANNING  
HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT



ARLINGTON  
VIRGINIA

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## Message from the Manager

A year ago, no one could foresee the far-reaching impacts of COVID-19 and how it has altered just about every aspect of our lives. In Arlington, as elsewhere, it has threatened public health leading to unemployment; food and housing insecurity; the closing of schools, public and private facilities, restaurants and more. As a community, we came together to address the situation. With the County leading the way, our network of community groups, non-profit networks and the business community quickly galvanized to address the many needs of County residents and businesses.



*Arlington County Manager Mark Schwartz*

For instance, working with the Virginia Hospital Center, Arlington Free Clinic, and the faith-based community we offered mass testing events. Through a collaboration with the non-profit group Arlington Thrive, more than 2,700 households quickly received emergency financial aid; and we worked with the courts, the Sheriff's Office, and legal services to aid residents at risk of eviction. We collaborated with Arlington Public Schools and other organizations to create the Cooperative for Hunger Free Arlington, and for the business community we established the Arlington Small Business Emergency Grant Program, funded in part by the Business Improvement Districts. In addition, with internet access emerging as a critical need for students attending online classes the County provided funding to support a joint County/School internet grant program through Comcast and added enhanced Wi-Fi locations throughout the County.

Operationally, the County adopted new ways to deliver resources and to engage with the public. We conducted building inspections virtually and expanded the Emergency Communications Center's capability to handle emergency calls remotely. To aid restaurants when the state prohibited in-person dining, we quickly mobilized to set up special pick-up/drop off zones for take-out or delivery services. Later, when alfresco dining became an option, we established temporary outdoor seating areas to accommodate restaurants' need for expanded space. With numerous online engagement opportunities many who had not participated in County planning processes, did so for their first time.

We accomplished all of this in the face of financial uncertainty due to lower tax revenues. We took steps to slow spending and re-allocated funds to pay for new costs associated with protecting the health and safety of the community and the County workforce. This included revamping the Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget that kept most service levels intact and excluded funding for new programs or additions to

existing services, deferred or reduced investments in capital projects, and delayed the opening of new facilities.

Beyond responding to COVID, we also made progress in our racial equity initiative or RACE: Realizing Arlington's Commitment to Equity. We offered a series of virtual conversations on race. Funded by a donation from Amazon, the sessions titled "Dialogues on Race and Equity," focus on how Arlington can be a more equitable place for residents and businesses. Also given heightened scrutiny nationwide to policing, the County launched a review of our Police Department's practices with the aid of a 15 member citizens group.

Proudly, our efforts to ensure the counting of every Arlingtonian in the 2020 Census resulted in 99.98% of all Arlington households counted.

Also 79% of registered Arlington voters cast a ballot in the 2020 General Election, the second highest participation rate in the County's history.

In closing, I want to thank each of our County workers who diligently performed their work this year under the most difficult circumstances anyone could imagine. I am proud of our efforts and mindful of the work that remains.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Schwartz". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Mark Schwartz, County Manager

## Extraordinary Times, Requiring an Extraordinary Response

2020 was a year like no other for Arlington County Government. It was an extraordinary period that posed several challenges that threatened the way of life Arlington residents have come to know and enjoy. It was a year of COVID-19, economic insecurity, and racial and social unrest.

The pandemic forced changes and required County operations to adapt; and in many instances abandon old ways of doing things. It also led to economic uncertainty as it forced the shutdown of many of Arlington's restaurants and retail businesses, depressed the hotel and tourism industries, and increased unemployment—all leading to a loss of revenue for the County.

Additionally, while Arlington began the effort to systematically address racial inequities last year, the initiative took on more urgency in the wake of growing national concern.

But guided by the principles of public service and a commitment to sustaining Arlington as community in which people thrive, the County addressed each challenge without hesitancy.

## COVID-19—A Challenge Met Head-on

On March 13, County Manager Mark Schwartz signed a [Declaration of Local Emergency](#), effective that night for Arlington County in response to the “growing occurrences of COVID-19” and its threat to public health. The County Board ratified the action on Saturday, March 14.

Almost immediately, departments pivoted to new service delivery models. Programs embraced new platforms and innovations, employees adapted to working remotely, and the County leveraged its partnerships with the nonprofit and business communities and other Arlington based organizations to address the challenge. In short, COVID brought about change in almost everything as the organization mounted a coordinated effort to address the immediate needs of Arlingtonians: public health; food insecurity; and housing, employment, and financial assistance.

## Public Health Response

The County's public health response began during the earliest days of the pandemic when County staff began working with travelers returning from COVID-impacted areas. Mass testing events soon followed. The first, opened on March 18, in partnership with the Virginia Hospital Center (VHC) at 1429 N. Quincy St. The drive-through site collected samples from people experiencing COVID-related symptoms or who had received a doctor's order for testing. The second opened in May to provide testing for residents without access to cars. The County then collaborated with VHC and the Arlington Free Clinic to open the first walk up collection site May 12 at Arlington Mill Community Center at 909 S. Dinwiddie St. Two additional testing events took place at Barcroft Fitness and Recreation Center, 4200 S. Four Mile Run Drive, offering drive-through and walk-up testing, without requiring residents to be symptomatic or have a healthcare referral.



*Drivers Wait in Line For COVID-19 Tests at a County Pop-Up Event.*



Further, as part of the state's [Health Equity Pilot](#) to deliver COVID-19 testing and resources to communities disproportionately affected by the virus, the County has provided one-day testing events for residents in vulnerable neighborhoods at churches and pop up events around the County. As of October, nearly 3,000 residents have received tests at these events.

The County distributed COVID 19 kits at each event that contained hand sanitizer, reusable face coverings, and multilingual information about COVID support like rent and food assistance. Arlington Public Schools has distributed approximately 11,000 kits to students and their families at schools serving communities disproportionately impacted by COVID 19.

The County's public health efforts over time expanded to include contract tracing, enforcement of the Governor's orders as they relate to food establishments, intensive work with long term care facilities and health care providers, and community safety messaging.

## Housing Support

The County and its safety net providers marshalled resources in unprecedented ways to provide housing stability. This included increased eviction prevention and utility assistance, support for multifamily landlords, and comprehensive outreach and engagement to ensure that vulnerable residents are aware of available resources – all conducted via safe, new, no-contact methods.

Highlights include:

- As of October, more than 2,707 households received \$3.2 million in financial assistance to avoid eviction, pay utility bills, and pay other costs, such as late fees and arrearages. Compared to the \$1 million spent in a typical year, Arlington has provided nearly \$6 million to date from July 1, 2019 through November 30, 2020 to Arlington renters, including nearly \$2.5 million in local funds, \$500,000 in state Rent and Mortgage Protection Program funds, \$1.125 million in CARES Act funds, and \$2.4 million in Community Development Block Grant and Community Services Block Grant funds.
- To ensure residents at risk of eviction from their homes received appropriate services, County staff met regularly with the courts,

Sheriff's Office, the non-profit [Arlington Thrive](#), legal services providers, and landlords. County staff also participated in a regional eviction task force to share information and develop strategies.

- The County partnered with the [Arlington Thrive](#), as well as more than 20 housing and safety net providers, to develop creative outreach strategies, including delivering flyers to all multifamily properties, and public service announcements made available at Schools, on Facebook, and as part of virtual outreach events.
- One hundred households that participate in the County's [Moderate-Income Purchase Assistance Program and Home Improvement Program](#) (MIPAP) received loan forgiveness on payments between May and December 2020. This allowed them to concentrate their resources on their first mortgages and other household expenses.
- The County [provided loan repayment waivers for 19 County](#) loans for Committed Affordable Unit (CAF) properties. The property owners retained these funds to assist over 1,600 low and moderate-income households' rental needs, as well as address vacancies and other rent loss.



## Food Assistance

Lack of access to food quickly emerged as a pandemic-related crisis in the community. To address the need, the County joined APS and other organizations to establish the [Cooperative for a Hunger Free Arlington \(CHFA\)](#) to expand Arlington's food distribution models and create a network of resources. During the summer, the group provided more than 24,000 home-delivered meals to COVID-impacted households.

The County provided more than \$400,000 in grocery store gift cards for households in need of groceries. Four of the County's health safety-net partners, including the Arlington Free Clinic, the Arlington Pediatric Center, the Virginia Hospital Center Outpatient Clinic, and the Department of Human Services' Maternal and Child Health Clinic, distributed the cards. Staff also worked to connect residents to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and the Arlington Food Assistance Center – both seeing record numbers of new enrollments.

In addition, APS provided over 124,000 meals after schools closed in March and supplied gift cards, groceries, and meals for an additional 1,400 families in partnership with area PTAs and [Real Food for Kids](#). They also provided free grab-and-go meals (lunch and breakfast) for children aged 2-18.

At the time of this report, Schools were offering free meals for all children 18 and under, at 22 school locations and seven drop-off locations throughout Arlington.

## Relief for Small Businesses

In April, the County introduced the [Arlington Small Business Emergency GRANT](#) (Giving Resiliency Assets Near Term) Program to provide immediate financial assistance to Arlington's small businesses impacted by the pandemic.

Funding for the program came from reallocated grant funds originally set aside in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 budget to retain technology companies in Arlington.



The program, which began in early May, provided grants of up to \$10,000 to Arlington businesses and non-profits with less than 50 employees that could prove revenue losses of 35% or more because of the crisis.

In June, the County announced after evaluating more than 1,100 applications, 394 businesses, located throughout the County and centered along the major commercial corridors, received GRANT funds (53% of eligible applicants).

Award amounts varied, up to \$10,000 per business. More than 37% are restaurant and food service operations, nearly 26% are personal service businesses, approximately 10% are health and medical businesses and 10% are retail businesses.

Businesses could use the grants for employee salaries and benefits as well as other capital and operating expenses directly related to the immediate impacts of COVID-19. Each recipient agreed to sign the Arlington Small Business Emergency Performance Grant Agreement, submit a final report to Arlington Economic Development and provide documentation of how they used the grant.

The GRANT program is a collaborative effort of the County, the Arlington Industrial Development Authority and the Ballston, National Landing and Rosslyn Business Improvement Districts that provided a total of \$2.8 million in funding, including an increase of \$1.6 million from Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) funding that the County Board approved in June -- more than doubling the funding available for applicants.

## Restaurant, Retail Small Business Support

The COVID-19 pandemic shut down many of Arlington's restaurant and retail small businesses. And the County worked quickly to enact an emergency ordinance that, among other things, provided greater flexibility for Arlington's small businesses to offer everything from food delivery services to outdoor seating.

When the Governor's Executive Orders in March eliminated in-person dining for restaurants, Arlington County quickly initiated an [online request service](#) for pick-up/drop-off (PUDO) zones for take-out or delivery services – free of charge. To date, the County has nearly 200 PUDOs, predominately along the Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor and with clusters on Columbia Pike, Crystal City, Pentagon City and Shirlington.

As restrictions eased, outdoor, in-person dining became an option for restaurants; however, many of Arlington's restaurants lacked the physical space to have diners seated outdoors.

Staff worked to find a solution for the restaurant community—[Temporary Outdoor Seating Areas \(TOSAs\)](#). The County created TOSAs to accommodate outdoor seating in an expeditious manner and free of charge. By October, more than 100 restaurants had applied for a TOSA. Collectively, they have received approval for more than 900 outdoor tables, representing more than 2,800 dining seats to help sustain the restaurant community. Businesses that serve alcoholic beverages, need an approved County TOSA permit to apply for a second permit from Virginia's Alcohol Beverage Control Authority.

Additionally, in December the County Board was set to consider allowing temporary, public outdoor seating areas, not associated with restaurants, with tents and heating elements during the winter months to increase the number of outdoor spaces for people to gather.



*Outdoor Seating Areas Are Helping to Sustain Arlington's Restaurants.*

## Digital Access

With more people working from home and students enrolled in virtual learning, reliable home internet service became critical during the crisis. But not all Arlington homes have access to the utility.

In response, beginning in March the County established wi-fi hot spots in select areas of the County to provide free access to the [ArlingtonWireless](#) network. The sites are open daily to County residents who need online access for work, schooling, health-related information or more.

Access to the network is available at parking lots at select libraries, community centers, parks, fire stations and the plaza at the Bozman Government Center.

Additionally, in July, the County allocated \$500,000 from CARES Act funding to support a joint [County/School Internet Essentials Grant Program](#) to provide broadband internet access to APS students. As a result, low-income families who qualify for [Internet Essentials](#) from Comcast will enjoy free, high-speed internet access for one year from the date of registration.

Arlington was the first community in Virginia to partner with Comcast to offer free broadband services to students and their families. APS will administer the program through a contract with Comcast and will cover the \$9.95 monthly cost so that students can have much needed access to online learning and other resources.

## Employment Services

Employment was hard hit by COVID-19. This led to County staff actively pursuing grant funding to assist residents whose employment status changed because of the pandemic. The effort was successful and by December the County had secured four Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) grants totaling more than \$491,000 for employment services for Arlington and Alexandria residents.

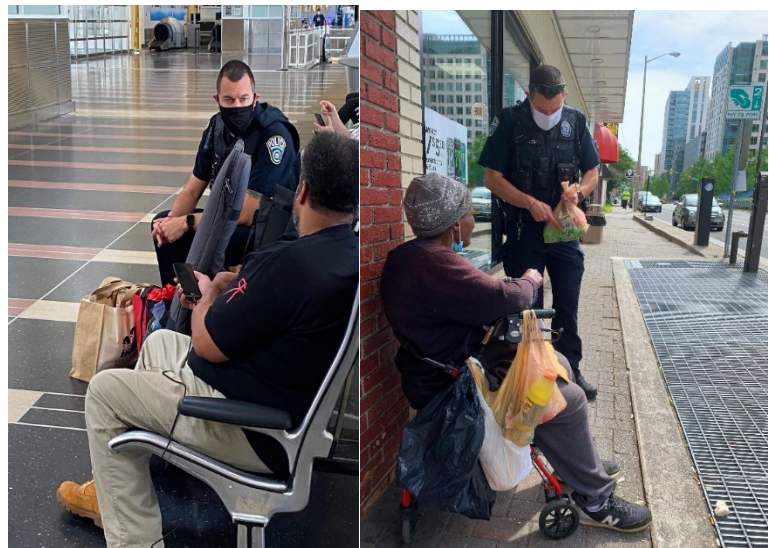
In July, the County accepted a \$109,155 "Wagner-Peyser Service Provision" grant from the [Virginia Employment Commission](#) to help laid-off Arlington and Alexandria residents and local employers looking to hire staff.

The remaining grants were awards from the Virginia Community College System. The first, amounting to \$87,619, was a WIOA "Virginia Rapid Response COVID-19 Business Support Initiative" grant that funded layoff aversion strategies and activities conducted to prevent, or minimize the duration of, unemployment resulting from COVID-19 layoffs. The second, accepted in October, was for \$240,665 for a rapid response fund to prevent, and/or respond to layoffs from Washington Reagan National Airport. It will support residents and businesses in Arlington and Alexandria. Arlington's Employment Services will work with airport employers to help identify additional support that might prevent layoffs and will offer online training for those who do lose their jobs.

## Other Services Provided

Beyond the issues addressed earlier, the County implemented additional measures to deal with the crisis. Here are some highlights:

- **Virtual Building Inspections:** In March, the County began conducting building inspections virtually instead of in-person to protect the health of the inspectors and customers. This included building, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, and energy inspections; Certificates of Occupancy; site reviews of special exception properties; and resident complaints. By the first week of December, County inspectors had conducted approximately 37,000 virtual inspections.
- **The Homeless Outreach Coalition:** In April, the County launched the Homeless Outreach Coalition to help identify unsheltered individuals at high risk for COVID-19 and connect them with available resources and services during the midst of the pandemic. The coalition is comprised of stakeholders from the [Police Department](#), [Department of Human Services](#), and [Arlington Street People's Assistance Network \(A-SPAN\)](#). The coalition interfaces with unsheltered individuals to connect them to available resources and support services.



*Members of the Homeless Coalition Performing Outreach in the Community.*

- **Automatic Pedestrian Signal Phases:** The pandemic brought low traffic volumes to County streets along with more people traveling on foot. In April, the County began installing automatic pedestrian signal phases at all signalized intersections in densely populated corridors to ensure pedestrians could move safely in and around the identified areas—without having to press push buttons, a common high-touch surface. The signals are in the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor, Crystal City, Pentagon City and Shirlington Village and along Columbia Pike and Lee Highway.
- **Free Leisure Programs:** Park and Recreation staff offered 700 free programs in County Parks reaching more than 8,000 people and 1,200 virtual programs attracting more than 4,500 participants, with 19,912 visits to the four fitness facilities that opened in June.



## COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Has Far-Reaching Impact on County Finances

**A**rlington County began 2020 with a very bright financial forecast. The revenue picture was strong almost across the board and expenditure growth was manageable. The Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 budget was shaping up to provide funding to continue progress in a few key program areas.

The arrival of COVID-19 changed all of that immediately. Staff adjusted downward their FY 2020 revenue projections to reflect lower tax revenues and the County took steps to slow down spending as well.



The FY 2021 budget process effectively started over to reflect dramatically lower revenues. At the same time, the County needed to plan for new, emerging costs to support the health and safety of staff and the community amidst a global pandemic all through the equity lens of who benefits, who bears the burden, who is missing and how do we know.

To achieve that, the adopted FY 2021 budget kept most service levels intact with an \$811 million County Operating Budget, reduced from \$846 million and a Schools transfer of \$524.6 down from the initial proposed \$546.3 million. It eliminated compensation increases for employees, excluded funding for several new programs or additions to existing services, deferred/reduced investments in capital projects and delayed the openings of the Long Bridge Aquatics & Fitness Center and Lubber Run Community Center.

The reductions financed needed COVID-19 related services including safety net and housing funding, such as housing grants, permanent supportive housing; emergency needs, such as food assistance; support for small businesses and nonprofits; service delivery recovery and employee support for those who worked through the pandemic's response including mental health services. It also provided for possible additional revenue shortfalls.

The County received over \$50 million in grants in calendar year 2020 to offset some of the costs of COVID-19, including a \$41 million allocation of CARES Act funding from the Commonwealth of Virginia. As most of these grants had spending deadlines of December 31, 2020, the County needed

to plan to locally fund the ongoing costs of the COVID-19 response efforts moving into 2021.

On the positive side, the COVID-19 emergency also pushed the County to adjust some financial processes to better function in the new remote work environment.

The County secured new software solutions to enable a fully electronic procurement process as well as electronic workflows and signatures for financial documents. In addition, COVID led to other process improvements:

- In July 2020, the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) expanded its capability to handle emergency (9-1-1) and non-emergency calls from any remote location. This significant achievement has enhanced the ECC's ability to sustain delivery of critical services despite significant events, incidents, or conditions.

The County has struggled with providing a second or back-up ECC for years. The pandemic revealed a temporary solution, and possibly new insights for a permanent resolution.

- The County established a [COVID Hotline](#) that expanded and focused staff's ability to respond to inquiries from the public while freeing up emergency communications staff who answer public safety non-emergency phone lines. In just three months, from April to June 2020, the hotline received more than 1,500 calls related to COVID-19.

## Racial Equity Evolving

While racial inequities and social injustice received national attention in 2020, the County took transformative steps during the year in its work to advancing equity in its programs and services, or [RACE: Realizing Arlington's Commitment to Equity](#). RACE envisions Arlington as a place where all are valued, educated, healthy and safe regardless of race. Or as its mission states “As an employee,



resident or business in Arlington, advance racial

equity as a county-wide priority to eliminate, reduce, and prevent disparities in our policies, procedures practices, engagement, and interaction with and service to the community.”

The year saw the appointment of the County’s Chief Race and Equity Officer, offering training for County leadership to lay the foundation for advancing racial equity throughout the organization and the launch of the [Dialogues on Race and Equity \(DRE\)](#).

The Dialogues, funded by a donation from Amazon, follow the County Board’s [2019 Equity Resolution](#). It features virtual conversations on race with individuals, nonprofits, faith organizations, civic associations, and businesses to learn about and address the ways in which Arlington can be a more equitable place for all residents and businesses. They focus on:



- DRE in Your Community –small interactive virtual conversations amongst neighbors to learn and discuss race and equity in Arlington County.
- DRE Together –interactive conversations held among Arlington nonprofits, civic associations, faith organizations, and businesses, providing training for volunteer partners on how to lead conversations on race with their stakeholders and spheres of influence.
- DRE in Your Neighborhood –neighbor-to-neighbor facilitated conversations in the community.

Arlington is partnering with the Arlington-based [Challenging Racism](#) organization to facilitate the dialogues. The group also is conducting an assessment on perspectives on race and equity in Arlington.

The work will conclude with a report to the County Board on the major themes that emerged from the conversations and assessment and recommendations regarding how to move forward as a community to progress racial equity.

Also, during the year, the County’s GARE (Government Alliance on Race and Equity) Cohort, a senior-level interdepartmental work group charged with developing an equity agenda/plan/framework for Arlington, concluded its 10-month learning program with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) and GARE program in July. Now the group is participating in the regional effort to advance racial equity in government.

Building on the experience of the cohort the County established a Racial Equity Core Team with representation from all departments to further the work within the County on the departmental level.

In addition, in November, it initiated a Leadership Arlington cohort project to look at best practices and models for a coordinated equity effort between Arlington Public Schools and the County government.

*(Continues on the next page)*

### *Racial Equity from page 12*

The County's racial equity work is intended to accomplish four goals:

1. **Normalize** – Develop a shared understanding, knowledge, and nomenclature around racial equity, within the organization and among the community.
2. **Organize** – Create a sustainable and supported structure to advance racial equity to include personnel and resources that become a defined and integral part of the organization and the system.
3. **Operationalize** – Adopt a racial equity lens and tools as standard practice in developing and considering policies, plans, and decisions and the allocation of resources.
4. **Assess** – Establish a baseline for where and who Arlington is as a community upon which to measure progress and make relevant adjustments in continued advancement of the direction we intend to grow.

### Process to Change County Logo, Seal Underway

In September, the County announced that will begin a community wide process to change the County logo and seal as well as consider changing the names of places and facilities belonging to the County.



The process, seen as part of the County's work to advance racial equity, began weeks later with educational presentations, recommended reading, and community discussions around Arlington's history.

It includes gathering perspectives on race and equity in Arlington, and examining county symbols, street names and facility names that may be associated with systemic racism or oppression. The review will build on the community process employed to update the County's Historic Preservation Master Plan.

The logo, seal, and flag all feature the image of Arlington House, officially known as "Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Memorial," where Confederate General Robert E. Lee lived, and where his family-owned slaves, before the Civil War. County officials anticipate the renaming process to begin in early 2021.

### Review of County Policing Policies Initiated

This summer, the County initiated a [review](#) of several Arlington County Police policies to ensure the department is current with policing best and next practices and continues to build community trust.

The County contracted consultants with experience conducting Police department assessments, policy reviews, criminal justice reform and conflict analysis to lead the process. *(For additional information see page 41 of this report).*

### Framework Established to Bring Restorative Justice to Arlington

Restorative justice views crime not only as illegal activity but actions that harm people, relationships, and the community.

Its practices help build a supportive community while creating effective responses to conflict and harm and provides an alternative to punitive discipline.

On November 17, the County Board accepted [the Restorative Arlington Strategic Plan](#), which provides a framework for the County to adopt restorative justice practices in Arlington public schools, legal system, and community settings.

Arlington expects to receive a \$75,000 grant award from the Annie E. Casey Foundation to help implement the plan.



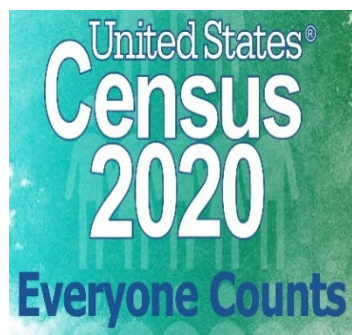
## Nearly All Arlington Households Enumerated in the 2020 Census

The Decennial Census has occurred every 10 years in the United States since 1790. For the 24<sup>th</sup> count, Arlington initiated its [Census 2020](#) work on April 1, 2019, exactly one year in advance of Census Day, April 1, 2020.

A core staff team led an extensive countywide awareness campaign to educate the public on the importance of participation in the 2020 Census. This effort involved forming a coalition with the [Arlington Complete Count Committee, \(CC\)](#), a 42-person, County Manager-appointed committee made up of Arlington residents and staff.

The coalition developed an outreach plan and worked as Census Ambassadors throughout the community, with focus on the hard-to-count populations and those less likely to respond to the census.

They recruited more than 370 Census Partners and Champions, attended over 300 events, and hosted several special activities to train partners, canvas neighborhoods, and count residents.



***Arlington's Complete Count Committee and County Staff Led the Effort to Count Every Arlingtonian for the 2020 Census.***

In mid-March, COVID-19 forced the suspension of in person outreach efforts. During this time, the CCC contacted residents through social media, virtual events and more.

For instance, on Census Day, April 1, 2020, the County hosted a Twitterstorm, releasing messaging on the importance of the census and encouraging people to complete the survey. Community leaders, Census Bureau leadership and CCC members joined the County for a number of virtual events to discuss operations, encourage partners to continue promotions, and boost participation. In addition, as a part of the community COVID-19 Food distribution process, the committee included information and giveaways in each bag to reach those in the hard-to-count population.

In July, the Census Bureau resumed operations and partnered with the County to establish Mobile Questionnaire Assistance (MQA) sites. Using social distancing and other safe measures, MQA staff deployed to low response areas and encouraged people to take the Census on site.

The County also held several "get counted" events, during which attendees received free cleaning supplies (hard to obtain during the pandemic) and had an opportunity to complete the Census. These events proved successful with thousands of interactions with residents and hundreds completing the Census.

Census operations concluded on October 15, with an estimated 99.98% of Arlington households enumerated. The results showed 76.5% of county households self-responded to the Census online, by phone, or by mail. The remaining 23.5% of households received visits from Census takers from the Crystal City Area Census Office.

The results also highlight the successful partnership of County staff and the community leaders who served on the Complete Count Committee.

## SAFETY NET SERVICES

While responding to the year's major disruptions, the County continued its work to provide social safety net services for Arlington's most vulnerable residents.



This included remaining steadfast in its pledge to provide affordable housing for moderate-and-low-income residents by leveraging the site plan process to secure pledges for future affordable housing and funding, conducting housing studies, and more. The County also re-affirmed its commitment to fair housing by joining in an agreement with other regional governments to conduct a regional analysis of the barriers to fair housing, including laws, policies, or practices.

The focus on increasing childcare options for parents remained as evidenced by the County's support of the effort to provide a safe place for Arlington students at Arlington Mill Community Center to attend online classes outside their homes during the pandemic, the acceptance of grant to funding for childcare scholarships and the initiation of "[Stewards of Children](#)" training for the prevention of child sexual abuse.

Services for older Arlingtonians continued highlighted by the adoption of [Arlington's Age Friendly Action Plan](#), offering a guide for Arlington to become an age inclusive community, and the effort to increase the availability of Elder Care Housing in Arlington. The County also collaborated with Hilton Hotels to launch a Friendly Callers (*Calling Angels*) program. This unique partnership has helped reach more than 130 homebound, older Arlingtonians to reduce loneliness and social isolation.

Also, the County enhanced its services for day laborers and the unemployed by revising its grant agreement with the Shirlington Employment and Educational Center; and amendments to the Human Rights Ordinance added gender identity protections.

The examples discussed above are highlights of the diverse spectrum of services the County provides to promote an equitable quality of life for all Arlingtonians.

## Housing Arlington

Each year, the County uses a mix of financial, land use, and zoning tools to further its affordable housing supply goal.

In 2020, the County Board approved projects that secured 246 net new committed affordable units (CAFs) and \$12 million in future developer contributions to the Affordable Housing Investment Fund (AHIF). Additionally, property owners began construction on 257 previously approved units and completed new construction or rehabilitation on 627 other units.

### Financial Tools

AHIF is the County's main financing program for affordable housing development. Other [financial tools](#) available to the County include Transit Oriented Affordable Housing (TOAH), Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.



During the year, the County Board approved funding or loan documents for three housing projects that took advantage of a mix of financing options to fund their projects.

*(Continued on the next page)*

## *Affordable Housing from page 15*

### **Financial Tools** *(continued)*

- In February, the County Board approved \$7,257,000 in AHIF and \$984,000 in TOAH funds for AHC's Arlington View Terrace Apartments.

This project, located off Columbia Pike at 1420 S. Rolfe Street, will redevelop 30 of the existing units into a new 77-unit building, increasing the total number of Committed Affordable Units, or CAFs, at the Arlington View Terrace Apartments from 77 to 124.

- In March, the County Board approved loan documents for \$11,520,000 in County AHIF, and HOME funding for the Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH)'s Terwilliger Place.

This 160-unit CAF project, which closed on financing and began construction in May, will replace the previous American Legion Post building at 3445 Washington Blvd.

- In September, the County Board approved loan documents for \$11,021,000 in County AHIF, HOME, and CDBG funding for Wesley Housing's The Cadence.

This 97-unit new construction CAF project in the Buckingham neighborhood, at 4333 Arlington Blvd., closed on financing and began construction later that month.

### **Land Use Tools**

During the year, the County secured developer pledges for 199 future committed affordable housing units (CAFs) and more than \$12 million in cash contributions to the affordable housing fund through land use tools.

In March, the County received an agreement from CESC Mall Land, LLC for approximately 83,140 square feet of CAFs to be located off-site at the RiverHouse Apartments James Building at 1400 S. Joyce St.

Specifically, the approval of the company's Phased Development Site Plan (PDSP) proposal to combine three site plan projects at 101 12th St. S., 1900 Crystal Drive and 223 23<sup>rd</sup> St. S. provided an opportunity for the County to achieve major improvements in Crystal City while accelerating the delivery of planned community benefits including affordable housing.

Through the PDSP, CESC will convey a minimum of 70 existing units at RiverHouse Apartments affordable to renters with incomes up to 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI).



***River House Apartments Will Provide A Minimum of 70 Committed Affordable Housing Units.***

To avoid displacement of existing RiverHouse residents, the developer agreed to convert the units to CAFs when they become available through tenant turn-over.

The Board also approved the new developments at 1900 Crystal Drive and 101 12<sup>th</sup> Street South which netted affordable housing contributions of \$4.387 million and \$1.036 million, respectively.

Additionally, the County obtained agreements for cash contributions to the affordable housing fund from three other approved projects.

*(Continues on the next page)*



## *Affordable Housing from page 16*

### Land Use Tools *(Continued)*

In March, the County Board's endorsement of the Veitch Street Townhouses resulted in a \$45,544 future payment to the fund and the redevelopment of the Key Bridge Marriott site provided a \$5.806 million AHIF contribution. The April approval of the future Artis Assisted Living Facility on Lee Highway added another \$356,528 to the fund.

Additionally, in exchange for approval of a site plan amendment for the previously approved 1031 N. Vermont St. site plan project, (SP #447), the developer, Ballpark Development Partners, LLC., agreed to provide the County \$464,380 for affordable housing along with four two-bedroom ownership or rental units on site plus an additional one-bedroom unit in exchange for additional density and other requested modifications.

Ballpark has the option of proposing an off-site contribution which, at a minimum, would equal the number of units and bedrooms provided by the on-site option, subject to County Manager approval.

In November, The Board approved a residential project that includes 400 multi-family dwelling units on the site of Greenbrier Apartments on South Greenbrier St. Plans call for up to 124 of the proposed 400 new units be Committed Affordable (CAFs) with 62 units available to households earning up to 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI) and 62 units available to households earning up to 80% AMI.

While the projects discussed above are all future developments, one complex has been built--The Apex at 2900 S. Glebe Road. The AHC project is a new 256-unit CAF complex that replaced the Berkeley, a 1960s, 138-unit complex. By October, residents were moving in. In addition, the Apex is the first new construction affordable housing project to include solar panels to generate electricity and off-set common areas energy use.



## Missing Middle Housing Study Underway

With rising home values and limited housing options, Arlington is facing critical challenges to its highly-valued, diverse, and inclusive community. The County initiated the [Missing Middle Housing Study](#), which kicked off in October, to explore how preservation and construction of a greater variety of housing types, such as duplexes, triplexes, and small apartment buildings, could help increase housing choice and housing supply.

Missing Middle housing types already exist in Arlington but are in short supply due to regulatory barriers added to the County's Zoning Ordinance and General Land Use Plan (GLUP) overtime to limit their construction; thus, reinforcing racial and class-based segregation and inequities that persist still today. Creating new options will help address the Arlington's housing supply issues, create housing options more affordable than what is currently available, and begin to dismantle the long-standing exclusionary nature of Arlington's land use policy and planning framework.

Anticipated outcomes of the study include a shared community understanding of the missing middle housing gap, priorities for the study of housing types, options for County Board consideration, policy/regulation changes to enable new housing type(s), and identification of issues for further study. The Missing Middle Housing Study is an element of [Housing Arlington](#) and its Land Use Tools initiative.

## Serving Vulnerable Populations

Arlington's vulnerable population includes people at risk of poverty, social exclusion, discrimination, and violence, including, but not limited to, minorities, immigrants, people with disabilities, isolated elderly people, and children. The following is a snapshot of some of the County's efforts during 2020 to meet their needs.

### Safeguarding the Rights of All Residents

For the first time in Arlington's history, the County achieved a 100-point rating on the Human Rights Campaign Municipality Equality Index (MEI), a nationwide assessment of LGBTQ inclusion in municipal law, policy, and services.



The announcement of the score in December follows the County's amendment of the [Arlington's Human Rights Ordinance](#) to add "gender identity" as a protected basis, and to update the definition of "sexual orientation," consistent with recent changes by the Virginia General Assembly to include "gender identity" and "sexual orientation" as bases protected from discrimination. Although, the County's ordinance contained sexual orientation as a protected basis before the Board's action, the amendment updates the definition of sexual orientation, consistent with the definition of the term under the state Code.

### Improving Services for Day Laborers, Underemployed

In February, the County entered into a revised grant agreement with the [Shirlington Employment and Educational Center, Inc.](#) (SEEC), which provides employment, education and social services for day laborers and other unemployed County residents. In a separate action, the Board also approved an agreement with the organization to relocate its operations and jobs pavilion from the corner of South Four Mile Run and Shirlington Road to the Arlington Mill Community Center.

These actions allow SEEC to better serve its clients as they now have access to services provided on-site at the center and a safe, indoor place to gather while waiting for employment.

Additionally, in December, the County Board approved rental assistance for SEEC clients during the pandemic via direct payment to landlords.

## Age Friendly Action Plan Adopted

In May 2018, Arlington joined the AARP/World Health Organization network of Age Friendly Communities.

Since then, the County and Commission on Aging have worked to identify key areas of focus for making Arlington more age friendly. The result of that effort is the planning document – [Age Friendly Action Plan: Building an Age Friendly Community](#).

Adopted by the County Board in June, the plan offers a strategic framework for guiding Arlington's efforts to grow as a livable community for all ages with emphasis on the core values of inclusion, equity, access and elimination of stigma and stereotypes for older Arlingtonians.

The document focuses on strengthening the County's positive approach to aging and addressing observed gaps and concerns in five overarching areas: (1) Transportation; (2) Housing; (3) Participation and Inclusion; (4) Community and Health Supports and (5) Communication and Information.

The plan also details the actions, tasks, and timelines for achieving its goals and objectives, and the measures that will indicate success.

In July, the County announced that AARP had formally endorsed the Arlington plan, kicking off a three-year effort to achieve its goals and objectives.



## Donation Funds Childcare Scholarship

Childcare costs for two children in Arlington can cost up to 38% of the County's median income of \$117,000. In 2019, nearly 2,600 children lived in families in Arlington whose income was \$35,000 or less.

In February, the County accepted a \$200,000 donation from the Rosslyn-based Nestle' company through [the Arlington Community Foundation](#) to establish the Shared Prosperity Child Care Scholarship Program to ensure safe, affordable care for children living in the lowest income Arlington families.

The County's Shared Prosperity Child Care Scholarship Program grew out of the [Community Foundation's Shared Prosperity](#) initiative, which brings together government, businesses, and nonprofits to prevent the displacement of Arlington's lowest-income households. The initiative has identified the lack of affordable housing; prohibitively expensive childcare with limited availability; limited pathways to quality jobs that pay a living wage; and the lack of health insurance as the primary factors driving Arlington's lowest-income residents from the county.

The program aligns with the County's [Child Care Initiative's](#) commitment to ensure affordable opportunities for childcare for all Arlington families by growing the supply of high-quality childcare through changes to the Zoning Ordinance, local Code and other measures as detailed in the [Child Care Initiative Action Plan](#).



*Ensuring Affordable Childcare for All Arlington Families is an Important County Initiative.*

## State Funding Supports Youth, Family Services

During the year, the County received nearly \$1.32 million in funding from the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) for youth and family services.

In March, the County accepted \$1.28 million from the DBHDS to provide for increased staffing in the [Children's Regional Crisis Response \(CR2\)](#) program, a 24-hour mobile crisis stabilization service for Northern Virginia youth facing behavioral health crises.

In 2019, from July-June, the program served 472 youth of which 15% (73) resided in Arlington, although Arlington youth make up only 7% of the region's youth population. Further, during the first half of the period, the program served 269 youth overall, with 11.5% (31) of those being Arlington residents. The additional funding allowed the program to serve twice as many people and extend the age of the young people served from 17 to 21.

In addition, in May, the County received two additional DBHDS grants totaling \$39,412 to support adolescents, young adults and LGBTQIA+ persons of all ages.

The first, for \$33,000, funded a six-month pilot program for transitional aged Arlington adolescents and young adults with serious emotional disturbance and mental illness. The County also purchased a behavioral health application for young adults called [myStrength](#), an evidence-based tool that promotes a range of interventions.

The second, a Behavioral Health Equity Mini-Grant for \$6,412, will support residents who identify as LGBTQIA+. With the funds, the County hired a consultant to provide training for County staff and host a free panel discussion allowing individuals to share their life experiences.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Arlington began 2020 with a strong economy with low commercial vacancy rates, thriving restaurants and retail industries, hotels performing well and the technology sector preparing for rapid growth with companies attracted by the prospect of joining Arlington's business community.



*Arlington's Economy Began 2020 Thriving, Including Rosslyn Shown Here.*

All that and more changed with COVID-19 as shutdowns began in March and created an urgency for the County to find ways to support Arlington businesses.

Early action included establishing a small business grant program, initiating a free [online request service](#) for creating pick-up/drop-off zones for take-out or delivery services when in-person dining was restricted, and later creating a path for establishments to apply for and create [temporary outdoor seating areas](#), when outdoor dining was permitted.

Arlington's established economic development activities continued, however, as the County maintained its efforts to attract and support new and existing businesses, closely work with the hotel community to fill hotel rooms with meeting and leisure visitors and embrace new ways to promote the arts.

For instance, BizLaunch, the County's small business and entrepreneurial assistance network, continued to offer assistance, both online with webinars and virtual counseling and YouTube sessions.

The County also ramped up its work with other regional jurisdictions to create the Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance (NOVA EDA), an effort to collaboratively market the region as a center for technology companies.

All in all, Arlington's economic development efforts stand ready to help restore Arlington's economy back to pre-COVID levels.

## Arlington Remains an Attractive Location for New, Existing Arlington Companies

Despite the pandemic, the County's Business Investment Group continued to attract and retain companies in target sectors, including the [Parsons Corporation](#), with its new government services office in Courthouse and tech startup expansions such as [Interos Inc.](#) and [Hungry Marketplace](#) in Ballston and [Favor TechConsulting LLC](#) in Rosslyn.

Arlington also secured a win within the County's foundational aerospace and defense sector with the retention of [Raytheon's](#) regional headquarters in Rosslyn.

The County celebrated these achievements and all of Arlington's newest businesses in May during a week-long, virtual [Arlington Premiere](#), which also highlighted valuable resources for new businesses including those offered by the County's community partners, like the Arlington Chamber and Business Improvement Districts.

In all, from January through September, the County had 10 successes in attracting and retaining businesses, which resulted 333 jobs created and 323 preserved for a total of 656 jobs created/retained.

It also represents 80,843 new square feet of occupied office space, 124,794 retained square feet of space for a total of 205,637 square feet of occupied office space.

## Commercial Real Estate Market Remains Strong, Stable

The County's nearly even split of commercial to residential property tax base is not only an important ingredient to the County's economic resiliency — it is a defining feature of Arlington's mixed-use, walkable community that workers and businesses find attractive.

### New Office Construction Driven by Amazon

Amazon dominated new office construction with the County's approval of the construction of 2 million square feet of office space as part of Amazon's Phase 1 build out, with construction beginning shortly thereafter. Staff anticipates the Board's consideration of an additional 2 million square feet of space for Phase 2 in 2021.

Outside of owner-occupied Amazon space, preleasing drives new office construction. For example, the 190,000 square foot building at 4040 Wilson Blvd. delivered in Ballston in early 2020 after securing Avalon Bay as an anchor tenant.

### Diversification Key In Stabilizing the Office Market.

The third quarter 2020 vacancy rate of 17.1% remains below the peak levels of over 20% in 2015 as the County dealt with the impact of the federal Base Realignment and Closure action. This trend reflects the County's diverse tenant base with notable corporate and tech relocations and expansion over the past five years and the retention and expansion of some of the

County's large federal and nonprofit tenants.

## Strong Multifamily Residential Pipeline

A strong, growing multifamily apartment sector is a key to Arlington's economic stability and has continued to perform despite significant increases in new inventory. The strength of the multifamily sector is indicative of Arlington's regional position as a high-quality residential location for workers seeking an urban, mixed-use environment with strong amenities and excellent transportation options.

## Assistance for Small Businesses

More than 90% of Arlington's businesses have fewer than 50 employees. During 2020, [BizLaunch](#), the County's one stop-shop for small business information and resources, provided entrepreneurs a series of workshops and webinars, counseling sessions and YouTube sessions that reached nearly 8,700 clients.



Kicking off the New Year, BizLaunch worked closely with small businesses located on Columbia Pike to assist with the multi-modal transportation project, featured a Business Launch and Learn networking event and provided one-one-one technical assistance. Women's Month consisted of a variety of outreach efforts including participation in the second annual [AWE Summit](#) (Awesome Women Entrepreneurs), and a Pitch event with SCORE.

In October, BizLaunch celebrated the County's inclusive business community in coordination with the Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity with its first ever [SWaMmy Honors](#). The virtual awards ceremony celebrated more than 180 small, women, minority, and veteran-owned Virginia businesses with self-made videos demonstrating their ability to persevere and adjust business operations in light of the pandemic as well as their passion for their businesses.

In addition, during the pandemic, the BizLaunch team offered valuable resources online, including direct assistance with navigating several federal loan programs and helping businesses to pivot during these uncertain times.



## Tourism Service Shifts Focus to Make the Best Out of a Difficult Time

First felt in early March, the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on worldwide travel and tourism was both sudden and dramatic. Arlington's hotel occupancy and revenue dropped precipitously, reaching the lowest levels (both down around 90%) by the end of that month.

Arlington's Convention and Visitors Service in response shifted the focus of its outreach and marketing promotions to make the best out of the situation.

The County recognized industry partners through local business support, advocacy, and the in-house creation of the video, [Arlington, Virginia | We'll be Waiting for You](#); and the County's Convention and Visitors Service team helped facilitate connections for employment opportunities for furloughed hotel staff in the medical arena, and worked with hotels on arrangements that became a critical part of the COVID-19 response.



***During the COVID-19 Pandemic the County Promoted Outdoor Activities as a Way for Visitors and Local Residents to Get Outside and Enjoy the Area While Maintaining Physical Distancing.***

The team also directed resources to a summer–fall campaign, *The Insider's Guide to Our Outside*. Anchored by Washington Post editorial and digital promotion through the Post and TripAdvisor, the campaign launched in June and resulted in more than 1,300 room nights sold as of the end of November.

Additionally, the County announced in July that it received \$10,000 from the [Virginia Tourism Corporation \(VTC\) Destination Marketing Organization \(DMO\) WanderLove Recovery Grant Program](#). The VTC is the state agency charged with marketing Virginia as a travel and film destination.

Arlington will use the grant to showcase outdoor adventures in an urban setting to East Coast travelers and commission a photography and video shoot to expand its collection of images reflecting the County's cultural diversity. The images also will benefit VTC as it promotes Virginia to

domestic and international audiences. The [WanderLove campaign](#) provides travel inspiration for road trips, outdoor recreation, hidden gems, small towns and Virginia's signature [LOVEworks program](#).

Later in November, the VTC awarded the County an additional \$10,000 grant from its [Recovery Marketing Leverage Program \(RMLP\)](#), to help local and regional tourism agencies attract visitors by leveraging a match of local dollars and state grant funds.

## Transit Occupancy Tax Surcharge Now Permanent

As part of its [2020 General Assembly legislative packet](#), the County Board requested renewal of the County's 0.25% transient occupancy tax (TOT) surcharge on hotel rooms that funds travel and tourism promotion in Arlington, without an end date. Previous legislation included a July 1, 2021 sunset clause.

In support of the County's position Sen. Jane Howell introduced Senate Bill SB 107 and Del. Patrick Hope introduced House Bill HB 62. Both bills aimed to eliminate the sunset provision. The House passed HB 62 (76-22) and SB 107 (78-22), while the Senate voted 31-9 to pass SB 107 and 34-6 to pass HB 62.

On March 2, Governor Ralph Northam signed SB 107 into law and HB 62 on March 10, eliminating the restriction on the County's authority to impose the tax.

## Public Art Delivered

Arlington's public art adds to the County's livability and vibrancy. This year, three important projects and a new self-guided public art walking tour were unveiled:

### *Luminous Bodies* by Cliff

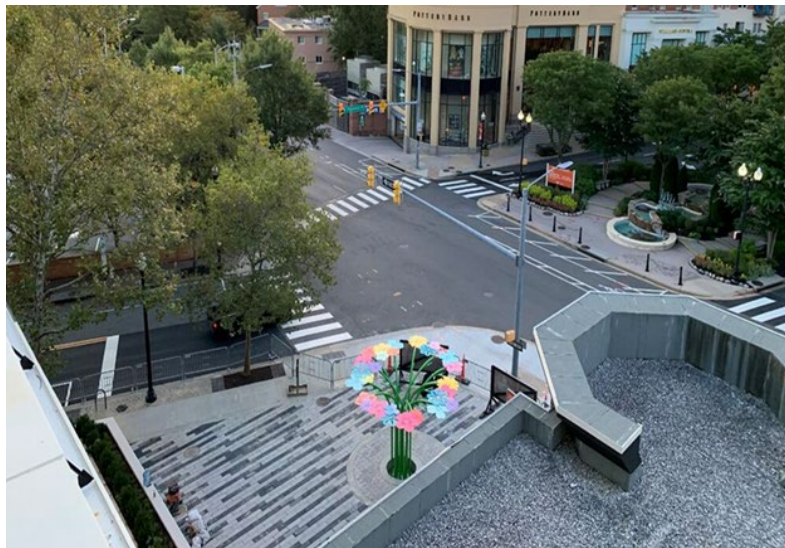
**Garten—** In June, the County concluded another phase of a multiyear effort to create a gateway for Rosslyn's central corridor with the installation of *Luminous Bodies*— the second of three planned public art installations, collectively known as the *Corridor of Light*.

Located at the Esplanade Bridge at North Lynn Street and Lee Highway, the work consists of four towering pylons of stainless steel positioned at a major entrance point into Arlington at the foot of Key Bridge leading from Georgetown, DC (two of the columns also are visible above Route 66 on the approach to Arlington from the Roosevelt Bridge). At the time of installation, the artist programmed the LED lights to glow blue green from 8-10 nightly, in honor of health-care workers responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The first phase of the *Corridor of Light* was the 2018 installation of *Gravity and Grace*, a LED light display near the Rosslyn Metro station. The third stage involves installation of additional lighted Luminous Bodies pylons on the North Meade Street bridge over Route 50.

Private development public art fund contributions from B. F. Saul Company & Affiliates, JBG Smith, and 1881 Rosslyn Associates, LLC funded the project.

***Floral Sky* by Michael Kalish—** Artist Michael Kalish created *Floral Sky* for the new plaza at Market Common Clarendon, located at 2801 Clarendon Blvd. The Regency Centers in collaboration with the County commissioned the nationally known artist to create a multi-dimensional sculpture of larger-than-life native blooms sprouting up from the ground.



*Floral Sky at Market Commons from above.*

***Ridge* by Foon Sham –** Located in Oakland Park, the artist created the *Ridge* as a shading element in the park. The piece reflects the artist's travels, from the Fjords in Norway to the Luray Caverns in Virginia.

***Self-Guided Walking Tours*—**Artist Graham Corell-Allen created a virtual *Rosslyn Public Art Walking Tour*. Through *Sidewalk*, an application for self-guided walks, patrons can join Graham to learn about public art in Rosslyn, which form the cornerstone of Arlington's extensive collection.

## Arlington Arts Moved Online, Over the Air During the Pandemic

Within the first weeks of the pandemic, the County's Arts program created a [resource page](#) offering constituents a broad range of offerings from ways to engage the family in at-home activities to self-guided walking tours.

These include activities from the [Arlington Art Truck](#), [Art on the ART Bus](#), Arlington Public Art, and resources from throughout the County, such as Arlington Public Library.

Yet, the program continued to offer many of its well-known events and activities, but in different formats. The County teamed with Arlington-based radio station WERA 96.7 FM to broadcast the Columbia Pike Backyard Blues Fest, a perennial favorite event, and the annual Lubber Run summer series. The Lubber Run programming featured five live in-studio performances aired by the station.

## PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Arlington's commitment to strategic planning has made the County what it is today—an attractive community for those wanting to live, work or play here.

The County's planning efforts support affordable housing, transportation, recreation and leisure, community development and more through careful application of land use policies. For instance, when seeking to increase the availability of quality childcare in Arlington, one of the tools the County employed was modification of the Zoning Ordinance, which led to more family daycare homes being able to accommodate a greater number of children.

During 2020, the County enjoyed several planning accomplishments from shepherding complex site plan projects through the review process for County Board approval to completing comprehensive land use studies to help guide future planning efforts. The County Board approved several large development projects this year. They include the Key Bridge Marriott site redevelopment, WETA's headquarters' expansion and a new six-story multi-family residential project along Columbia Pike. The County also took crucial steps in the rebirth of Crystal City with the adoption of a phased development site plan of three areas on Crystal Drive; and the reimagining of Shirlington with approval of the Shirlington Special General Land Use Study and Concept Plan.

During COVID, an interdepartmental team developed a process to allow Arlington restaurants to quickly create temporary outdoor seating areas to accommodate diners in a safe environment.

And looking towards the future, staff began the Missing Middle Housing Study, a part of the Housing [Arlington Initiative](#), that will explore how new housing types might help address Arlington's shortfall in housing supply and gaps in choices.



*Shirlington Library- A Fixture in the Shirlington Special Land Use Study Area.*

## Major Development Projects Approved

Through November, the County approved nine development proposals that range in size from a 15,920 square foot town house project near Colonial Village to an 828,306 square foot project at 1900 Crystal Drive in Crystal City.

Each was the subject of an extensive community engagement process that included evaluations by the Planning Commission's Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC), County commissions and community residents.

### North Veitch Street Townhouse Project Approved

In February, a proposal submitted by 1731 N. Veitch Street, LLC. for seven, four-story townhouses on the site of an existing 1920 farmhouse at 1731 N. Veitch St. won County Board approval. The Board also endorsed rezoning the site and amending the associated site plans for the property.

In addition to the County Board review, the SPRC, with representatives from nearby civic associations, assessed the project along with several County commissions.

The associated community benefit package offered through the project includes contributions to the affordable housing, utility underground and tree replacement funds; streetscape improvements; and a pledge to achieve Green Home Choice silver certification.



## Redevelopment of the Key Bridge Marriott Site Advances

In March, the County advanced a proposal to give new life to the Key Bridge Marriott hotel site on Lee Highway with Board approval of an application from KBLH, LLC to redevelop the property.

The Board also approved a related Master Transportation Plan amendment and real estate vacations and encroachments.

The Long-Range Planning and Site Plan Review committees and several County commissions, including the Transportation and Planning commissions, reviewed the project before its submission for County Board consideration.

Plans for the proposal feature partially demolishing and renovating the existing 12-story Key Bridge Marriott hotel at 1401 Lee Highway and constructing three new 16-story residential buildings offering 300 apartments and 51 condominiums.

The project offers new streets, an esplanade for pedestrians, removal of the pedestrian bridge over westbound Lee Highway, greater connectivity to the Custis Trail, an additional public space, and a future monumental park.

KBLH pledged to achieve LEED Silver and Gold (Green Building) Certification for the project and make cash contributions for affordable housing and open space improvements within the vicinity.

## Plans for Crystal City Renewal, New Buildings Approved

The County took a major step in the renewal of Crystal City as envisioned in the [2010 Crystal City Sector Plan](#) with the March approval of a PDSP for three sites in the area and a development proposal for the property at 1900 Crystal Drive.

The PDSP, which binds site plan proposals from JBG Smith for 1900 Crystal Drive, 101 12th Street S. and 223 23rd St. S., establishes a framework for how the projects collectively will deliver public improvements and other enhancements to the area as identified in the Sector Plan.

With this approach, the developer realizes the maximum amount of density achievable with each application, while the County gains from the “front-loading” of community benefits. These benefits include open space contributions for two large public parks-Center and Gateway- identified in the Sector Plan, transportation, and roadway improvements, approximately 83,140 square feet of affordable housing, space, and support for a community use (such as a library) and a commitment to achieve a LEED Silver (Green Building) rating.

The 1900 Crystal Drive project will have 811 apartments and 40,000 square feet of street level retail, divided between a 27-story tower with 472 apartments and a 26-story structure with 339 apartment. Plans also call for private rooftops and green spaces for residents as well as a central park space. The developer, CESC Mall Land LLC, also will provide a \$4.387 million affordable housing contribution along with a commitment to deliver committed affordable housing units at the RiverHouse complex and 7,200 square feet of space within the Crystal Mall IV building for community use, rent-free for 20 years, with \$250,000 a year in operating funds for five years. It also pledged to convey an easement for the future Center Park.

The project went through the SPRC process along with review by the Planning, Transportation and Climate Change, Energy and Environment commissions.



*Rendering of the Future 1900 Crystal Drive Development.*

## New Assisted Living Facility Coming to Lee Highway

In 2019, [Housing Arlington](#) began work to determine how to update the Zoning Ordinance (ZO) to expand the number of areas within the County that allow new elder care facilities with site plan approval.

The work concluded in January of this year with the adoption of a ZO amendment that clarified the zoning standards for elder-care housing in the Clarendon Revitalization District.

Months later, in April, a site plan application from Artis Senior Living of Arlington, LLC (Artis) to build a new assisted living facility at the intersection of Lee Highway and North Taylor Street won County Board endorsement.



*Rendering of the Future Artis Assisted Living Facility.*

The completed project, which combines nine parcels of land on the north side of Lee Highway, will feature a 6-story, 175-unit complex offering 80 memory care units and 95 assisted living units, with 10,174 square feet of public open space.

The company pledged to achieve silver-level certification under the LEED green building rating system and include design elements that support the principles of biophilia such as bird-friendly glass and outdoor spaces in the interior plaza and more.

It also vowed to contribute to the County's utility underground, tree replacement, public art and affordable housing funds and complete on-site streetscape improvements.

Artis presented its original application in November 2018 at a time when the Zoning Ordinance did not allow assisted living facilities in the area. However, it resubmitted its proposal after the County amended the ordinance.

County staff guided the proposal successfully through the SPRC and community engagement process before submitting it for County Board approval.

## Church Site Redevelopment Resurrected

In February 2018, the County Board approved a plan submitted by developer NVR Homes to replace the then two-story Grace Community Church (currently Portico Church Arlington) and its parking lot at 1031 N. Vermont St. with a 72-unit condominium building and 12 townhouses. Four of the on-site units would be committed as affordable housing.

NVR is no longer involved in the project and the property's new owners, Ballpark Development Partners, LLC., requested modifications to the previously approved redevelopment plan.

In June, the County Board approved the revisions following community review of the proposal through the Site Plan Review Committee process.

The approved changes include adding 4,200 square feet in gross floor area; removing an on-site alley; and modification of the building massing, siting, circulation, location of building services and its architectural design.

Other amendments involved modifying the Green Building Certification condition to allow the development to achieve Earthcraft certification in lieu of LEED, and revisions to the affordable housing contribution providing four two-bedroom ownership or rental units on site plus an additional one-bedroom unit, a gain of one additional unit from the original proposal.



## WETA Expansion Plan Green Lighted

In July, by a unanimous vote, and with overwhelming community support, the Board approved a series of actions that collectively created the conditions for the Washington Educational Telecommunications Association (WETA) to remain in Arlington.

The Board approved an \$8 million purchase and lease-back agreement for the station's studio property; an incentive grant; and amendment of the Shirlington PDSP and the WETA site plan. The last action provided the needed office density to the site for expansion of the headquarters building.

This brought to closure discussions that the County began in early 2016 with WETA about retaining its headquarters and studio locations in Arlington.

The station plans to add a 17,150 square foot, four-story addition to the existing building that will allow it to consolidate its operations in Shirlington. It will then convey its current television studio site at 3620 27th St. S. to the County for expansion of Jennie Dean Park.

The addition will feature a new television studio and offices and a large media screen at the building's ground level.

The overall project will include green design elements including electric vehicle charging stations in the garage, energy-efficient windows in the addition and low-emitting materials in both the new addition and the main building.

## Courthouse Hotel Conversion Moves Forward

In October, a proposal by Arlington Hotel Holdings, Inc. to convert an existing building located at 1200 N. Courthouse Road from a hotel to a residential property won unanimous County Board approval.

Specifically, the project will transform the hotel building from 187 guest rooms to 180 multifamily residential dwelling units (at this time contemplated to be condominiums) and reduce the overall parking for the site.

Other features include enhanced landscaping, screening in the interior and perimeter of the site, permeable pavers replacing a portion of the surface parking lot, a new interior sidewalk, and replacement and expansion of the existing north-south pedestrian pathway along the western edge of the site connecting 13<sup>th</sup> Street North to 12<sup>th</sup> Court North. The pathway will provide access across the site between the Court House Metro Station and the Arlington Boulevard Trail.



*Rendering of the Proposed New Residential Building for 1200 N. Courthouse Road.*

Additional changes include updated façade frames and trim, and private patios and terraces on the ground and top floor, respectively.

During the community review process the developer agreed to provide a set of improvements and amenities to mitigate the impacts of the project on adjacent properties and the neighborhood. This includes contributions to the public art and utility underground funds, an enhanced Transportation Demand Management Program, and installation of an in-building wireless first responders' network.

The existing hotel structure, built in 1962, was originally an apartment building. Its conversion to a hotel took place in 1980. In 2005, the County Board approved a site plan amendment for the site that allowed for reducing the number of hotel units, modify zoning provisions for lot coverage, and allowing redevelopment of a portion of the area with 252 new multifamily, townhouse, and stacked residential units (currently known as The Vista on Courthouse, and The Bell at Courthouse).

## New Crystal Gateway Office Building on Its Way

In November, developer JBG Smith won County approval to construct a nine-story office building at 101 12th St. S. in Crystal City, replacing an open green space it owns near Long Bridge Park. The completed project will have 34,427 square feet of office space and 5,195 square feet of ground floor retail.



*Rendering of the Crystal Gateway Building Looking East from 10th Street South.*

The building, known as “Crystal Gateway,” is the second of the projects included in the PDSP the County Board approved in March that linked three associated Crystal City site plans. The first was the 1900 Crystal Drive tower.

JBG will convey approximately 54,500 square feet of land to the County for a park—Gateway Park-- and contribute \$300,000 for the park planning process. The park will include recreational facilities such as tennis or volleyball courts, a playground, benches, and picnic tables for neighborhood use. A County led planning process will determine the park’s design and elements. Other benefits the project offers are on-site streetscape and landscape improvements, contributions to the utility underground and public arts funds, installation of an in-building wireless emergency responder communications system, public utility improvements and an enhanced Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program.

JBG also will achieve a LEED version 4 “Gold” certification, construct a new Ball Street connector road, and implement interim open space improvements at the northwest corner of the block.

The County conducted the public site plan review process virtually due to the pandemic.

## Greenbrier Apartments Set for Redevelopment

The County Board in November approved the redevelopment of Greenbrier Apartments, at 835-871 S. Greenbrier St.

The developer, Merion Pike West LLC, gained approval for a 6-story, multifamily residential project with 276 market rate units and up to 124 affordable units. The building, designed to meet LEED Silver standards, will contain two residential buildings separated by a firewall. Yet, as they share conditioned space, (parking and common areas) from a Planning and Zoning perspective they form a single structure.

Merion will offer a Tenant Assistance Fund to help eligible residents with temporary rent payments per the terms of the [County’s policy](#), and a Tenant Relocation Plan to provide relocation payments and services to eligible tenants displaced by the construction of the project.

The redevelopment meets several of the County’s [Affordable Housing Master Plan](#) goals and objectives as it will create CAFs, prevent the loss of 90 units of market rate affordable housing, and contain 62 family sized units. In addition, it will create CAFs located close to transit and the building will be certified LEED Silver which will help to advance the goals of the County’s Community Energy Plan and encourage water conservation.

The Form Based Code Advisory Working Group, and the Planning and Transportation commissions and more reviewed project.

## Major Planning Studies, Policy Updates Completed

The County's long-range or comprehensive planning efforts provide a road map for future development for both public and private property.

Produced as studies and concept plans, they consider not only land use, but transportation, the environment and more.

### Plan to Maintain Shirlington As a Vibrant Community Completed

In July, the County concluded a planning effort to ensure that the Village at Shirlington remains a vibrant community with the County Board adoption of the [Shirlington Special GLUP Study Plus and Concept Plan](#) and related General Land Use Plan (GLUP) amendments.

The study area's boundaries are Arlington Mill Drive, South Randolph Street, Interstate 395, and the County's Trades Center.

The document offers planning concepts and recommendations to guide future redevelopment across the multiple properties located in the area in a coordinated fashion. It provides parameters related to land use, building height and form, public spaces, circulation, historic preservation, tree conservation, sustainability, and connectivity.

It also identifies and outlines guiding principles and other desirable elements for incorporation into future PDSP amendments and site plan applications for redevelopment within the area, and documents

future GLUP amendments for requested changes. The adopted GLUP amendments add notes to the GLUP booklet and the GLUP Map identifying the [Shirlington Special GLUP Study Plus and Concept Plan](#) and a description of and references to the plan.



The Board also authorized advertisement of future public hearings concurrent with consideration of GLUP and PDSP amendments and site plan and rezoning applications associated with each site.

Public input and feedback obtained during community meetings with the affected civic associations and through the Long-Range Planning Committee process helped shape the plan. Staff also offered a walking tour of the area in July 2019, a community forum in November 2019, a project webpage and submitted the plan for review by several County advisory groups, including the Planning and Transportation commissions.

### Neighborhoods Form Based Code Amendment Ensures Affordable Housing

The [Columbia Pike Neighborhoods Form Based Code](#) (N-FBC) requires developers to provide a percentage of the total number of housing units in a new development as on-site affordable housing units. However, in limited instances, the code exempted commercial uses, and developers who propose non-residential projects for those sites from the affordable housing requirement.

This changed in July, when the Board adopted an amendment of the Code to require cash affordable housing contributions in those instances. This ensures all N-FBC projects contribute to the affordable housing goals established in the Neighborhoods Area Plan. For mixed-use residential projects, the existing affordable unit requirement would apply to the residential portions of the development. The cash contribution will apply only to the commercial portion of the development.

Leading up to the Board's vote, staff notified and made presentation to the Form Based Code Advisory Working Group, Columbia Pike civic association presidents, Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization, the Zoning Committee, and the Planning and Housing commissions.



## TRANSPORTATION

Arlington's transportation program provides the infrastructure and support services required to move people in, through and about Arlington County.

Its focus areas include pedestrian safety, public bus service, biking, commuter services, shared mobility devices (scooters and electric bikes), street maintenance, curbs and sidewalks, traffic signs and more.

During 2020, the County introduced a new tool to reduce speeding, the Vision Zero effort moved into its second stage of creating a countywide action plan to eliminate traffic fatalities and made headway on improvements at two of the County's busiest Metrorail stations in Crystal City and Pentagon City.



*Public Transit, Provided by ART Bus Service, is a Component of Arlington's Transportation Network.*

The County completed work on several biking and pedestrian improvement undertakings such as the Lynn Street Esplanade and Custis Trail project; deployed rapid flashing beacons at pedestrian crossings; and achieved substantial completion of the Columbia Pike West End Multimodal project. It also increased the number of available ADA-accessible on-street parking spaces and installed new parking meters that offer drivers a new payment method.

County staff managed the completion of several road and street projects and the Neighborhood Complete Streets Program identified its first three projects for attention. Specifically, crews completed paving 90.3 lane miles of Arlington roadways, filled 1,943 potholes, and replaced 10,735 linear feet of sidewalk and curb and gutters.

In total, even in the face of COVID-19, the County's transportation efforts kept people moving either by foot, subway, bike, car, scooter, bus, or any other mode.

## New Traffic Measure Adopted to Reduce Speeding

In January, the County Board voted unanimously to attach an additional **\$200 penalty** to fines for speeding violations committed on select residential streets. The action, taken in response to resident complaints about speeding and pedestrian safety, provides the County an additional tool to use in its effort to encourage speed limit compliance, especially in residential areas.

In February, the County identified the first three street segments qualifying for the special zones: (1) Carlin Springs Road from Columbia Pike to George Mason Drive; (2) Military Road from Old Glebe Road to Nelly Custis Drive and (3) Lorcom Lane from Military Road to Spout Run Parkway.

To qualify for the designation, a road must be in a residential area; classified as a neighborhood principal, minor arterial or major arterial street on the County's road classification map and have a documented speeding issue.

Staff found during a review of the locations, that for each segment the 85-percentile documented speed was 5 miles per hour or higher over the posted speed limit, and at least 75% of the property abutting the roadway segment is zoned residential and the roadways are classified as either a (1) neighborhood principal, (2) minor arterial or (3) major arterial.

## Vision Zero Action Plan Moving Closer to Development

Last July, the County Board adopted a resolution committing to [Vision Zero](#), “a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all,” and directed staff to develop Vision Zero goals and an action plan in collaboration with the public.

In January, as part of the process County staff hosted the first public engagement event for the project – an open house at Washington-Liberty High School. More than 65 members of the public attended and participated in activities focused on understanding the community’s goals and priorities regarding safe transportation. In addition, between January and October, County staff conducted online engagement meetings and held a series of pop-up engagement opportunities at community events around the County.

The program also collected, analyzed, and released data regarding the trends, patterns, and systemic safety issues in the County. This included information on serious and fatal injury crashes from 2017-2019 and their locations; identification of vulnerable road users like pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists; and “hot spots”, or locations with high concentrations of crashes.



## Clarendon Circle Improvements Provide Enhanced Travel Access, Safety

The County completed work on transportation improvements at Clarendon Circle in early 2020. The project involved redesigning the area to improve access and safety for all travel modes. Previously, travel across the intersection was difficult due to its extreme width and the skewed alignment of its roadways. North Irving Street also entered the circle area in two offset locations, further complicating the traffic pattern.

The finished project included wider sidewalks on Washington Boulevard; planting of 34 new shade trees throughout the intersection; and installation of benches, bicycle parking, a new traffic signal and new streetlights.



*Work at Clarendon Circle Completed Early 2020.*

It also created additional green space with the permanent closure of North Irving Street at the south side of Washington Boulevard and acquisition of land between St. Charles Catholic Church and the intersection. The added property also improved the bike connection between Fairfax Drive, Wilson Boulevard and Clarendon Boulevard with extra wide ADA ramps, pavement and sidewalk markings and signal timing to increase pedestrian and bike safety at the intersection.

Design analysis for this intersection was performed as part of the development of the [Clarendon Sector Plan](#) and the [Clarendon Multimodal Transportation Study](#). The design analysis strongly suggested that roundabouts, one-way street couplets and other alternative designs would have negative impacts on all transportation, especially for pedestrians, and recommended improving the intersection by normalizing the existing geometry as much as possible and reducing its size. Planned improvements applied the Clarendon sector plan’s general design but reduced the overall size of the intersection.

## Lynn Street Esplanade & Custis Trail Project Provides A Gateway to Rosslyn's Central Corridor

This year, the County celebrated the completion of the [Lynn Street Esplanade & Custis Trail Project](#), a multi-year endeavor to create a gateway for Rosslyn's central corridor, and enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety, and traffic management in the area.

The project's improvements benefit travelers on Lynn Street, Lee Highway, and the Custis Trail. For Lee Highway, the changes included widening the Custis Trail, replacing signals and streetlights, bus stop improvements, installing ADA compliant curb ramps and planting trees.



***The Lynn Street Esplanade & Custis Trail Project Added a Host of Transportation Improvements for Motorists, Bicyclists and Pedestrians.***

The Lynn Street treatments feature several placemaking efforts, including wider sidewalks, landscaping and the installation of the [“Corridor of Light”](#) sculptures in coordination with the County's Public Art program.

The Custis Trail improvements, completed in 2019, provided bicycle and pedestrian facility upgrades, including intersection improvements, lane reconfiguration, trail widening, curb extensions, wider curb ramps, signal modifications and increased trail separation.

The project, a joint effort of the County and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), incorporated findings from the 1999 Esplanade Study, the 2003 Rosslyn Circle Safety Study, and the 2006 Lynn Street Esplanade Preliminary Design Study.

The County began the project's public engagement process in 2005 with its initiation and continued through 2016 when it submitted the final plans to VDOT.

## Added Flashing Beacons Enhance Pedestrian Safety

A Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) is a set of flashing, high-intensity yellow lights, mounted below a pedestrian warning sign, adjacent to crosswalks. They help increase the visibility of pedestrians at existing crosswalks.

When activated by pedestrians, the flashing lights signal drivers that they must stop for the crossing pedestrian.

In 2020, the County installed RRFBs at six new locations, bringing the total number of Arlington crossings enhanced by RRFBs to 24, adding to more than a decade of success with the devices.

The year also saw the installation of the County's first two-staged crossing using RRFBs at South Carlin Springs Road and 8th Road South. Staged crossings reduce pedestrian crossing distance, decrease pedestrian wait time, and allows pedestrians to focus on traffic one direction at a time.



***Rapid Flashing Beacons Increase Pedestrian Safety.***



## First Neighborhood Complete Street Projects Funded

In July, the County Board approved funding for the first two projects to progress through the full [Neighborhood Complete Street process](#) as outlined in the [Neighborhood Complete Streets Program Guide](#). Specifically, the Board approved \$1.074 million in funding to complete a block of missing sidewalk on 13th Street South in Douglas Park and intersection and transit stop improvements along 7th Road South in Arlington Mill. Both projects scored among the top of the Neighborhood Complete Streets Nominated Problem Street Locations list. Staff evaluated each submission to determine if delivery would be feasible given project constraints and available program funds.

Before County Board consideration, each progressed through a public process, which culminated in the [Neighborhood Complete Streets Commission \(NCSC\)](#) funding hearing,

In related action, the Board also approved a revised [NCSC Charter, Program Guide and Ranking Guidelines](#).

The County Board established the program in 2016 to address safety and access problems on local (non-arterial) streets through physical improvement projects. It complements the [Complete Streets Program](#) for noncommercial arterial streets and the [Neighborhood Conservation Program](#).

## Improvements at Crystal City, Pentagon Metrorail Stations Gain Momentum

The Crystal City and Pentagon City Metrorail stations are among the most heavily used in the area. In July, the Board acted to move forward with long-needed improvements at each station.

As early as 2010, the County identified the need for access improvement at the Crystal City station. The Board moved a second entrance at the station closer to reality with the approval of an agreement with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA ) for design support services for the entrance—or the [Crystal City Metrorail Station East Entrance Project](#). The agreement provides that the County will pay WMATA up to \$230,000 for its support services during the design phase.

Additionally, the Board approved an interim agreement with CESC Square, LLC, a JBG Smith subsidiary, for the project’s construction. Under the agreement the County will pay the company \$3.73 million, including a contingency, to bring engineering for the project to 30% completion.

The project will create a new entrance on the northwest corner of 18th Street South and Crystal Drive that will provide: (1) a direct ADA accessible route from the east; (2) better connections with the transit modes east of the station; and (3) additional internal station capacity.

At the [Pentagon City](#) station, construction of a second elevator on the west side of South Hayes Street, near the existing west side escalator, will improve access for patrons making transit connections and for retail customers and tourists. The realization of the second elevator advanced with the Board’s approval of a \$817,283 contract, including a contingency, to Procon Consulting, LLC to manage the project’s construction. The elevator will improve ADA access as well as access for passengers with strollers and luggage and provide redundancy when the other elevator is out of service.



*Pentagon City Metrorail Station Improvements Advanced in 2020.*

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The County's environmental efforts during 2020 moved it closer to realizing its goal of becoming a carbon neutral community by 2050 as set in the 2019 update of its [Community Energy Plan \(CEP\)](#).

This included entering an agreement to purchase solar power, joining the Biophilic Cities Network, working to update the Green Building Density Incentive Policy and Forestry and Natural Resources Plan, stormwater management and more.

### County Enters Agreement to Purchase Solar Power

In January, the County signed an agreement with Dominion Energy to purchase power from a planned 120 MWpeak photovoltaic solar farm in Pittsylvania County, Va. The farm located between Danville and Lynchburg, Va., was primarily agricultural at the time of the agreement.



Dominion Energy will build and own the farm, which County staff projects will begin producing electricity in 2022. The County plans to purchase 31.7% of the energy produced, or about 79 million kWh annually, representing approximately 83% of the total amount of electricity used by the County each year. This will allow the County to surpass its 2022 renewable electricity milestone established in the updated CEP and substantively meet its 2025 goal of total renewable electricity for County operations.

Arlington was the first Virginia jurisdiction to enter into a power purchase agreement of this size for off-site solar energy with an investor-owned utility company. Before then, the County purchased electricity from Dominion, but under this new agreement it will save about \$30,000 per year. Further, this action confirms the County's role in local government as a leader in environmental sustainability.

The County is free of any capital funding or upfront costs as part of the agreement. Amazon plans to purchase the balance (68.3%) of the power to support its new Arlington headquarters, web services, data centers and more.

### Arlington Joins the Biophilic Cities Network

In March, the County announced its acceptance into the global [Biophilic Cities Network](#). As a Biophilic City Network Partner, Arlington will strive to conserve and celebrate nature in all its forms and apply this philosophy to its current and future policies and practices.

To that end, through 2020, staff tracked how the County's progression in several areas such as expanding natural elements within Arlington's built environments and providing equitable access to green spaces, parks, and other natural elements.

In addition, the County installed two new "green streets" in 2020, contributing toward its Biophilic Cities commitments.

The installations at 11th Street North (between North George Mason Drive and North Evergreen Street) and at North Oakland Street and Pershing Drive, add stormwater management where there was no existing treatment, remove pollutants from stormwater runoff and help the County meet stormwater regulatory requirements.

Countywide, green streets manage stormwater runoff from a combined 25 acres of drainage area, nearly the footprint of the Pentagon. They also replace pavement or grass with native landscaping, add habitat, help reduce urban heat island impacts and improve right-of-way aesthetics.



## Update of the Forestry & Natural Resources Plan Underway

In November, the County launched its public engagement effort as part of the update of the [Forestry and Natural Resources Plan](#), which is a sub-element of the County's [Public Spaces Master Plan](#) and a merger of the Natural Resources Management and Urban Forestry Master Plans.



The plan will assess various aspects of Arlington's natural resources and urban forest system and provide strategies that address current circumstances and account for future conditions and needs to advance Arlington's stewardship of its natural resources.

The County plans to broadly elicit the perceptions, interests and aspirations of Arlington County residents and stakeholders about the County's urban forest and natural resources to inform the development of the Forestry and Natural Resources Management Plan and bring their priorities to life.

Staff anticipates presenting the final plan to the County Board for review by May 2022.

## Green Building Density Incentive Policy Update Crosses the Finish Line

The County encourages developers to build high-performance green buildings to reduce environmental impacts on the community through its voluntary [Green Building Density Incentive Policy for Site Plans](#).

The policy allows developers of large office, multi-family, and mixed-use projects to apply for bonus density in exchange for incorporating environmental and energy efficiency components in the building.

In December, the County completed a major update of the policy with the Board's approval of a number of program changes proposed to encourage the construction of more climate-friendly buildings. The policy also will help the County reach its 2050 carbon neutral goal as established in the 2019 update of the Community Energy Plan.

The updates feature additional incentives for property owners to achieve Zero Carbon certification, allow for off-site renewable energy sources for the building's energy use, emphasize ongoing energy performance in buildings in addition to energy efficiency in construction, and include specific requirements to achieve high levels of energy performance.

The County's energy/[AIRE \(Arlington Initiative to Rethink Energy\)](#) staff presented the proposed changes to several community groups, including the Planning, Climate Change, Energy and Environment, Economic Development and Parks and Recreation commissions, Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee, the Chamber of Commerce and NAIOP, the Commercial Real Estate Development Association. They also posted the revision on the County's Green Building webpage for public review.

Since its creation in 1999, Arlington's Green Building Density Incentive Program has led to the development of over 30 LEED® certified commercial, apartment, and hotel developments.



# FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

## Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Totals \$1.345 Billion

The County Board approved a [\\$1.345 billion General Fund Budget for Fiscal Year \(FY\) 2021](#) in April. With budgetary pressures for essential community services amid the coronavirus pandemic, the Board chose not to increase tax rates while also accepting a reformulated budget proposed by the County Manager that addressed the estimated \$56 million revenue loss.



The adopted budget funds those investments that are most important at a time of great uncertainty: essential services such as food assistance, housing, and public health; support to the business community and non-profits; and creating added financial flexibility as a bridge to recovery by slowing capital projects where possible, using budget reserves, and postponing new initiatives.

In addition to establishing a \$10.2 million contingent fund for COVID-19 related relief, the budget foregoes salary increases for all staff and \$10.5 million of program enhancements that had been part of the County Manager's original proposed budget in February, continues a hiring freeze put in place in March, delays the opening of the Lubber Run Community Center and Long Bridge Park Fitness & Aquatics Center until Fiscal Year 2022, and uses \$4 million in funds from the Stabilization Reserve to close the gap between revenues and expenditures.

The Board retained strategic investments to respond to the County's housing affordability challenges with \$16.0 million allocated to the Affordable Housing Investment Fund (AHIF) and increases to the Housing Grants Program and the Permanent Supportive Housing Program.

The spending plan also includes the continuation of safety-net programs important to the community, such as Offender Aid & Restoration (OAR), homeless services, and others. For public safety, the Board increased funding for recruitment to remain competitive in the region and for staffing in the Fire Department.

Employee benefits also increased including enhancements to the paid parental leave policy, dependent care subsidy, and others.

The adopted budget utilizes \$4 million of the County's Stabilization Reserve, leaving a balance of \$7.8 million. Set at 1% of the General Fund Budget, the County funds the reserve to address unexpected temporary events requiring immediate incurrence of cost; revenue declines; and local economic stress.

Over the past few years, the County has increased the reserve funds to weather various events, and most recently in response to the pandemic and the resulting economic downturn. In addition, the County's financial policies require replenishing any use of reserves within the subsequent two fiscal years.

Overall, the adopted budget decreased 1% from the FY 2020 Adopted Budget. Of the \$56 million revenue loss, \$34 million is for County government and \$21.6 million for Arlington Public Schools.

The County provided Schools \$524.6 million, or 47% of local tax revenue.

Also, since the budget's adoption the County has provided over \$10 million in additional support to the Schools in response to the COVID-pandemic and related health and safety costs.

Importantly, the staff developed the final budget with the County's equity initiative in mind, again asking the questions of who benefits, who bears the burden, who is missing and how do we know?

## New 1-Year Capital Improvement Plan Funds Capital Projects, Infrastructure Investments

Every two years, Arlington updates its 10-year [Capital Improvement Plan \(CIP\)](#), a planning document outlining the County's long-range capital investment objectives. This year, however, the community faced unprecedented health, safety, and economic hardships due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. As a result, the County Manager proposed, and the Board approved, a one-year CIP in the amount of \$277.5 million. Arlington Public Schools' also adopted a one-year CIP in the amount of \$186.8 million. The intent is to return in spring 2021 with a short-term multi-year plan (three to four years) and return to a normal 10-year cycle in two years.

The one-year CIP focuses investments on projects currently underway (e.g. Fire Station 8, Lubber Run Community Center, Jennie Dean Park), critical infrastructure at the end of its useful life (e.g. West Glebe Road Bridge), legal and regulatory requirements (e.g. Metro), technology and building investments that directly address the impact of COVID-19, projects that strengthen the stormwater infrastructure system and the implementation of a body-worn camera program for police, sheriff and fire marshals. The transportation program in the CIP also re-focused on projects already underway, those with external funding sources, and critical infrastructure

improvements. Major transportation investments include the Crystal City Metro Station East Entrance, the Ballston-MU Metro Station West Entrance, and Columbia Pike Streets Program.

A new focus of this year's CIP was stormwater. With the repeated intense storms for the past several years, the County increased funding for the program to pay for critical and immediate investments in stormwater infrastructure. This includes investments in stormwater capacity improvements, water quality projects, and maintenance capital. To meet these increased needs, for the first time the County issued bonds to increase the stormwater fund.



***Green Street Projects are a Featured Component of the County's Stormwater Capacity Improvement Efforts.***

While the majority of this year's CIP only focuses on FY 2021, the stormwater fund adopted a multi-year program that totals \$58 million. To ensure the ongoing fiscal health of the fund, the FY 2021 CIP also added new language to the County's financial and debt management policies specific to the stormwater fund. This includes new debt coverage ratios, and replenishment requirements of any draw from the operating and maintenance reserve.

The County Board, in adopting the CIP, authorized five bond referenda totaling \$144.545 million for voter consideration on the November 2020 ballot to finance projects identified in both the County's and Arlington Public Schools CIPs. Voters subsequently approved the County referenda that will finance up to \$41.1 million in capital investments in Metro and transportation, local parks and recreation and community infrastructure, and the Schools referendum that will finance up to \$52.7 million for Arlington Public Schools. They also approved the \$50.8 million stormwater infrastructure bond referendum, new this year.

Prior to the pandemic, the County initiated a public engagement process to survey and solicit feedback from a wide cross-section of the community; receiving almost 900 responses. Unfortunately, the pandemic forced cancellation of the planned in-person community meetings.



## Coveted Triple-AAA Bond Rating Retained



In October, the three national credit rating agencies—Fitch, Moody's, and Standard & Poor's—once again reaffirmed Arlington's Aaa/AAA/AAA debt rating. This was the 20th consecutive year that the County received the rating, maintaining its place among just 48 counties in the United States to receive the valuation.

Fitch, in describing the County's credit strengths, noted that "Arlington County's dynamic economic base, coupled with a strong revenue framework, solid expenditure flexibility, conservative budgeting and close monitoring of expenditures underpin favorable financial results and support Fitch's expectation of resilient operations through the current recession and future economic downturns."

Standard & Poor's stated that "very strong debt and contingent liability profile, including very well-funded pension and other post-employment benefits (OPEB) plans, is a credit strength." Moody's noted the County's "sound financial operations supported by conservative fiscal management."

County Manager Mark Schwartz remarked that "As Arlington weathers the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, maintaining the triple-Aaa rating is critical to the County's ability to provide the services and programs that Arlingtonians need. Holding the highest rating allows Arlington to continue financing and refinancing capital projects at the lowest possible cost."

## County Issues General Obligation Bonds

On September 15, the County Board approved the sale of up to \$172 million in [General Obligation Public Improvement Bonds](#) and authorized the refinancing of existing debt.

On October 8, the County successfully issued \$166 million of General Obligation Bonds for new County and Schools projects at a 1.80% average interest rate, the lowest on record for a County sale of new bonds. The County sold the bonds through a competitive sale, with Bank of America Securities having the winning bid.

Proceeds from the sale of new money bonds will finance projects approved by the County Board such as the County's capital contributions to Metro, Neighborhood Conservation, trail maintenance, Lubber Run Community Center, Long Bridge Aquatics and Fitness Center, Jennie Dean Park, Fire Station 8, maintenance capital, and Arlington Public Schools projects.



***The County will Direct Part of the Proceeds from the Bond Sale to Pay Arlington's Metro Contribution.***

The County was able to take advantage of current low interest rates to refinance \$241 million of previously issued bonds for debt service savings of over \$22 million in interest spread over the next 13 to 15 years. Additionally, the County issued a total of \$14 million of new IDA revenue bonds to finance the County's short-term capital needs at an average interest rate of 0.42%.





## Arlington Property Values Up

Arlington's overall property value as of January 1, 2020 consists of a mix of commercial and residential properties, 48.6 and 51.4% respectively.

The County announced in January that Arlington's real estate assessments for 2020 showed a general increase in value of 4.6 % over 2019. The 2020 assessment was an estimate of the fair market value as of January 1, 2020, with residential assessments based primarily on neighborhood sales occurring between September 1, 2018 – August 31, 2019.

Real estate assessments are appraisals, or the County's opinion, regarding the value for each parcel, based on generally accepted standards of the real estate appraisal and assessment profession. The average value of an Arlington residence (existing single-family properties, including condominiums, townhouses, and detached homes) increased 4.2% from \$658,600 in 2019 to \$686,300 in 2020. New construction values represented 0.8% % of total growth while existing real estate value was up 3.8 % over the same period.

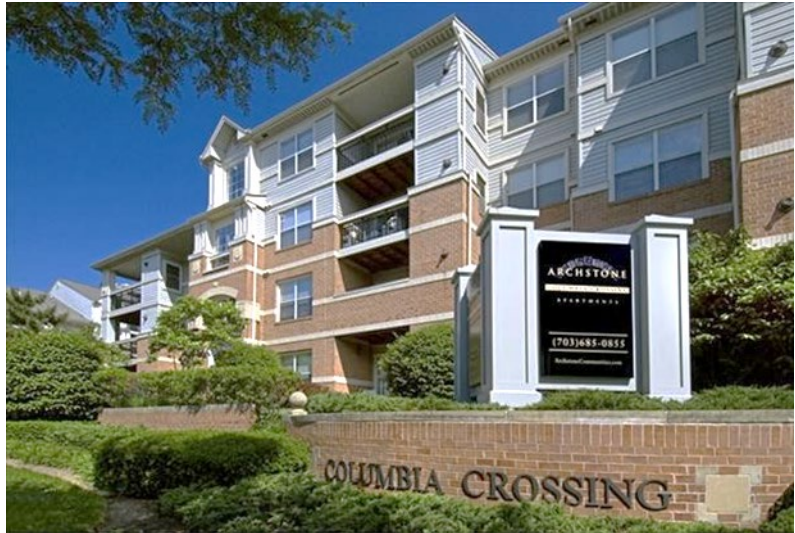
The commercial tax base, which includes office buildings, apartments, hotels, and retail, increased 3.5 % over 2019 for existing properties. New construction added 1.5 % of value to the commercial tax base for a total commercial growth rate of 4.9%.

Existing office property values increased 2.3 %, with an

additional 0.2 % growth attributed to new construction.

Apartment properties, representing 45.8% of the commercial tax base, provided additional growth of 6.1% for existing properties and new construction contributed an additional 2.8% growth for an overall increase of 8.9% over calendar year 2019 values.

Values of existing general commercial property (including diverse types of retail) experienced a 1.8% increase, partially offset by 1.5% growth due to new construction in this class. Existing hotels decreased 1.7% in 2020 and experienced no additional change from new construction.



*The value of Arlington Apartments grew by 3.5% in 2020.*

## Financial Reporting Recognized for Excellence

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada awarded Arlington a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its [Comprehensive Annual Financial Report \(CAFR\)](#) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2019.

This was the 34th consecutive year that the County has achieved this prestigious honor. The award recognizes governments that produce easily readable and efficiently organized comprehensive annual financial report in accordance with standards established by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and applicable legal and compliance requirements established by law.

The GFOA also presented the County its *Award for Distinguished Budget Presentation* for its FY 2020 budget. This award is the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting and Arlington has received this award for more than 30 consecutive years.

A Certificate of Achievement and the Award for Distinguished Budget Presentation are valid for one year only. County officials trust that the organization's comprehensive annual financial report and subsequent budget will continue to meet the award's requirements.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

Arlington's public safety efforts involves safeguarding the public, protecting people from crime, fire, disaster, and other potential dangers and threats. It includes law enforcement and fire and emergency medical services provided by the Police and Fire Departments and the Department of Public Safety Communications & Emergency Management.

### Arlington County Police Department

The [Arlington County Police Department](#) provides professional law enforcement services to the Arlington community guided by three initiatives- crime prevention and control, transportation safety, and community engagement. The following are highlights of the department's activities during the year.



*Community Engagement is one of the Three Key Initiatives of the Arlington Police Department.*

### Body Worn Camera Program Funded

Body worn cameras are an emerging technology, lauded for their contribution to police accountability and transparency as well as their evidentiary value. BWCs are mobile audio and video capture devices that record what officers see and hear. In June, the County Manager announced that funding for a [Body Worn Camera \(BWC\) program](#) for Arlington's Police Department, Sheriff's Office, and Fire Marshal's Office was included in his proposed FY 2021 CIP. In July, the County Board approved the CIP and funding for the program slated to begin in January 2021.

Specifically, the CIP provided \$268,000 for body-worn camera hardware; \$244,000 for upgrades to four County courtrooms to support the technology; \$536,000 for data storage, software, and maintenance; and

\$755,000 for replacing existing in-car camera systems to one compatible with body-worn cameras.

In a separate vote, the Board appropriated nearly \$500,000 to cover the program's first-year staffing cost. Staff plans to request funding to cover additional staffing needs and ongoing data storage, software, and maintenance as part of next fiscal year's operating budget process.

They also will request funding for technology upgrades for the seven remaining courtrooms as part of the FY 2022 and FY 2023 CIP process. Full-year funding for all personnel and ongoing data storage, software, and maintenance will cost approximately \$1.6 million per year.

As part of the engagement effort for the program, the Arlington County Police Department, Sheriff's Office, and Fire Marshals' Office sought the public's input and feedback on draft Digital Evidence Management System policies, regulating digital audio and video recordings captured by body worn cameras, in-car cameras, and interview room cameras.

The goal of the engagement was to create model policies utilizing established best practices and to continue to strengthen community relations and professional standards within the departments by enhancing transparency, accountability, and training.

## Review of Police Practices, Policies Underway

In July, at the direction of the County Board, the County Manager initiated a review of the Police Department to ensure the department is current with policing best practices and continues to build community trust.

Two consultants with experience conducting police department assessments on practices, policy review, criminal justice reform and conflict analysis are leading the assessment.

The first step of the process was an external review and evaluation of current policies and practices in six key areas: (1) Use of Force; (2) Training and Supervision; (3) Body Worn and Vehicle Dash Cameras; (4) Recruitment and Retention; (5) Internal Affairs; and (6) Data/Statistics.

A 15-member [Police Practices Group \(PPG\)](#), that began meeting in August, will review the results of the assessment. As part of their work, they will focus on four policy areas: (1) police civilian review board – what type and approach? (2) the role of the police department in providing mental health services; (3) the role of the police department in traffic enforcement; and (4) the opportunity for alternative dispute resolution, including restorative justice and mediation.

The PPG will develop recommendations in four policy areas and is set to report to the County Manager by the end of 2020. The group will share its results with the County Manager

as he recruits for a new Police Chief and to help shape possible recommendations to the County Board for improvements. To inform its recommendations, the group had public engagement sessions to gather community input.

In fact, the community had an opportunity to provide insights and comments to inform the PPG work plan through November 1.

## Introducing FRK9 Brooks, ADA Service Dog in Training

In June 2020, the Police Department partnered with [1st Responder Canine \(FRK9\)](#), a Virginia based non-profit organization, to train a future service dog. FRK9 Brooks is a 10-month-old male Labrador, who for the next two years, will train and socialize with his handler, Officer R. Ryan, a member of the department's Community Outreach Unit.

When in-person public events resume, [FRK9 Brooks](#) will attend to interact with the community and help to complete his training. While with the police department, FRK9 Brooks will also assist with officer wellness through de-escalation of strong emotions and stress that are often an inherent part of policing.



*FRK9 Brooks and his Handler, Officer R. Ryan.*

FRK9 provided FRK9 Brooks, his medical care, food, and training at no cost to the police department. Upon completion of Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) certification, FRK9 Brooks will become a lifelong assistance partner to a first responder (Fire, Police, or Emergency Medical Personnel) who has incurred a life altering injury such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injuries (TBI) and physical mobility disabilities.

The non-profit named [FRK9 Brooks](#) in honor of Fire Chief Norman Brooks, Sr., who dedicated his life to serving and helping others. Chief Brooks, Sr. served the Spotsylvania community and positively impacted lives for 47 years, until his passing on February 13, 2019.



## Arlington County Fire Department

The mission of the [Arlington County Fire Department \(ACFD\)](#) is to “serve the community with compassion, integrity and commitment through prevention, education and a professional response to all hazards.” In 2020, the department successfully adapted to major challenges posed by COVID-19, welcomed new firefighter/emergency medical technicians, and delivered fire and emergency medical service to the community.

### Whole Blood Treatment Program Introduced

In an effort that was years in the making, in September, the Arlington Fire Department began providing whole blood treatment for patients suffering major bleeding prior to arriving at the hospital.

The department estimates that approximately 20-30 people per year in Arlington County will benefit from the treatment.



Medical services usually handle life-threatening bleeding by rushing patients to the hospital to receive blood transfusions, which can delay treatment for upwards of 30-45 minutes with the potential of significant worsening or even death. Administering whole blood in the field allows for stabilizing patients much faster.

The department stores the blood product in special coolers with Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Supervisors who received intensive training in administering it to patients. The first use of whole blood to stabilize a seriously injured trauma patient took place less than two weeks after the program began.

A regional coalition of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) experts from the Arlington County Fire Department, Loudoun County Fire Department, Fairfax County Fire and Rescue, and the Northern Virginia EMS Council developed the program in partnership with the Inova Blood Donor Services. It is among the first in the country to make whole blood available to ground EMS units, and considered one of the largest field administered whole blood programs in the nation with more than 2.5 million people in the Northern Virginia region.

## Snapshot of ACFD Calls Shows Responsiveness to Community Needs

In 2020, the Fire Department's call volume decreased, and crews addressed fewer calls for service than in 2019. From January 1 to August 31, the ACFD responded to 17,557 incidents: 10,017 medical emergencies and 7,540 were fire or public service related. Crews responded to 330 structure fire calls and five incidents designated as natural disasters such as flooding or severe storm damage.

Arlington County continues to be a beneficiary and active partner in the area's automatic aid systems in the country, where the ACFD both provides and receives aid from neighboring departments on routine and significant incidents.

A prominent example of the region's aid system occurred on February 8, when a large apartment building under construction caught fire in Fairfax County, sending crews from across the region to assist.

The department also responded to several significant events in Arlington, including removing an individual from under a Metro train on January 23, rescuing a dog from a house fire on May 31, and conducting a technical rescue involving a rope descent from a high-rise building on August 14.

Since June 11, 2019, the County has not lost a civilian life due to fire. Additionally, no ACFD personnel have suffered serious injury or lost their lives in the course of their duties during the year.



## New Firefighters Join the Ranks

The department's Recruit Class (RC) 78 navigated many challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic to officially graduate on September 25, 2020.

Due to the pandemic, RC78 was the first class in the department's history to conduct part of their training virtually. Academy staff were instrumental in adapting the recruits to the hybrid format.

The recruits successfully passed all department and state certification tests and have moved on to their first assignment in a fire station as probationary firefighters.

As probationers, they will continue to work for another year to build upon the skills they learned at the fire academy and have the opportunity of attending advanced training programs, such as paramedic school, early in their career.

The new firefighters will bolster the workforce and help with the long-term goal of work-life balance.



## Department of Public Safety Communications & Emergency Management

The mission of the County's [Department of Public Safety Communications and Emergency Management](#) is to coordinate emergency preparedness and response capabilities, resources, and outreach for the Arlington community. During 2020, the department played a critical role in the County's COVID-19 pandemic response, particularly in the activation of the County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in March and remaining galvanized for more than 100 consecutive days—the longest in the Arlington's history. Yet, the department continued to perform its other functions. A highlight of those activities follows.

### 9-1-1 System Goes Digital, Remote

The [Arlington Emergency Communications Center \(ECC\)](#) joined with the Alexandria Department of Emergency and Customer Communications to deploy a new, state-of-the-art shared 9-1-1 system.



*A Look Inside Arlington's Emergency Communications Center.*

This new shared system provides greater redundancy and resiliency to provide critical emergency communications with the public. The digital-based system provides opportunity for expansion of the system to use in remote areas and will permit the integration of new emergency networks which will allow for the public to communicate with 9-1-1 centers in additional ways such as sending videos and pictures in the future.

In addition, In July 2020, the ECC expanded its capability to handle emergency (9-1-1) and non-emergency calls from any remote location. This significant achievement has enhanced the ECC's ability to sustain delivery of critical services despite significant events, incidents, or conditions. Twelve Emergency Communications Technicians now can handle calls from their homes with access to the same technologies and capabilities in the center itself. The ECC will soon be piloting the addition of remote dispatch capabilities.

## Arlington Remains StormReady

This year, County staff worked with the National Weather Service (NWS) to renew the Arlington's [Storm Ready](#) status originally granted in 2010. For recognition as a StormReady community, the department demonstrated, among other items, that Arlington County:

- Has an established system, with redundant methods, to receive and relay National Weather Service warnings to the public, 24 hours a day.
- Addresses hazardous weather in its Emergency Operations Plan.
- Provides hazardous weather education and outreach to the public, including a Skywarn Weather Spotter network.
- Maintains a strong working relationship with the local National Weather Service office, in Sterling, Va.
- Has the capability to monitor local weather observation data for hazardous conditions.



*County and National Weather Service Staff Pose for a Photo While at the NWS Headquarters for StormReady Training.*

[StormReady](#) is a voluntary nationwide program designed to help counties and communities take a proactive approach to severe weather that affect their areas by improving local hazardous weather operations and heightening public awareness.

Counties work with the National Weather Service, state Emergency Management, and the media to become StormReady. By participating in this program, local agencies can earn recognition for their jurisdiction by meeting the guidelines established by the NWS in partnership with federal, state, and local emergency management professionals.

## Cost Recovery Unit Focusing on Securing Funds

The Department of Public Safety Communications and Emergency Management is responsible for submitting claims to the state and federal government for reimbursement of expenses incurred while responding to disasters and emergencies.

During fall 2020, DPSCEM staff coordinated the County's submission of \$3.96 million in eligible damages to the Virginia Department of Emergency Management to support the cost recovery and rebuilding from the damage caused by the floods in July of 2018 that caused significant damage to private and county buildings, parks, roads, and bridges, as well as debris in the right of way and in waterways throughout Arlington at over 20 different locations.

In the spring, the County formed a Cost Recovery Unit to submit public assistance cost recovery claims to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for eligible emergency protective measures related to Arlington's pandemic response.

As of September 30, the unit had submitted project worksheets totaling \$4.77 million, to support emergency operations support and logistics; public safety; the purchase and distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE); mass care and feeding programs; quarantine isolation, and community-wide testing.

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

In 2020, the County remained committed to meaningful and successful multi-tiered public engagement processes, framed and led by the County's [Six-Step Guide to Public Engagement](#).

Its seven guiding values— inclusion and mutual respect; early involvement and timely communication; transparency and accountability; clear and accessible communication; open, two-way communication; fiscal sustainability; and continuous improvement— continue form the foundation of the County's engagement initiatives and strategies, despite the challenges of the ongoing pandemic.

### County's Engagement Efforts Adapting, Evolving, Reaching New Heights

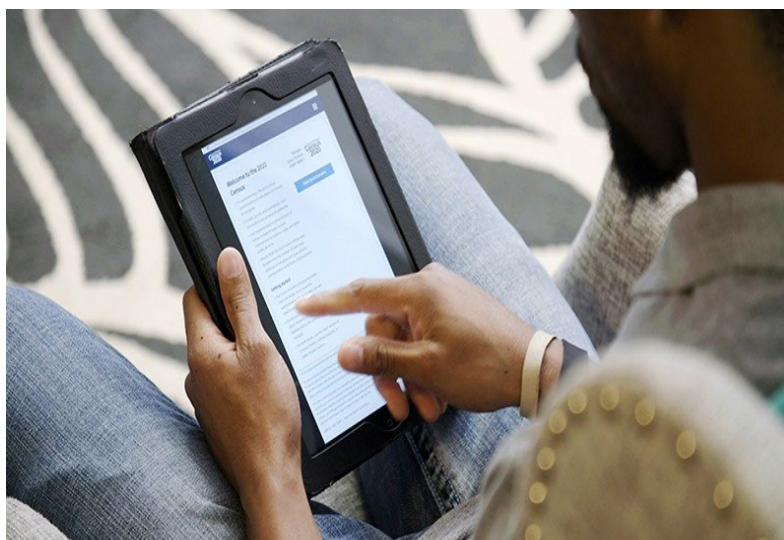
Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the County was already building a robust approach to online and virtual engagement, which provided for a strengthened and more diverse outreach and engagement strategies. The COVID-19 pandemic forced its public engagement approaches to shift and adapt to an online world.

Online meetings have proven to be attractive for people who otherwise would not be able to attend due to work schedules, childcare issues, or other reasons. For example, the virtual kickoff meeting for the Police Practices Working Group had

more than 5,300 views. The Residential Parking Permit virtual engagement garnered feedback from 270 people, including 46 online meeting participants. In addition, the second phase of Vision Zero feedback, which ended last month, had 533 participants, including 33 for the online meeting, while the first phase—which ended before the pandemic—had 633 unique users online, 68 open house attendees, 129 people reached at pop ups.

County departments have seen strong community interest also in their online offerings. For example, the Department of Parks and Recreation has had more than 4,500 participants in its virtual programs and nearly 44,000 views for YouTube and Facebook recreation programs.

A revamped site plan review process uses interactive, virtual walking tours and online engagement sessions to collect more feedback from broader audiences. Since the pandemic began, virtual Planning Commission meetings have included more than 60 attendees when previous in-person meetings would average closer to 25-30. The recent Missing Middle Housing Study kickoff had more than 180 virtual attendees. As it took place online, interested residents who could not make the set date and time were free to watch its recorded session at times convenient for them.



The County ramped up its efforts to diversify participation and gather input from its black, brown, and immigrant communities. This includes holding some meetings in different languages. In collaboration with trusted partners throughout Arlington, the County hosted conversations with Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Latino Parents in Arlington, Asians in Arlington, as well as Ethiopian, Mongolian, and Guatemalan community leaders. These conversations, which had more than 20,000 online views, focused on the needs of the respective community during the COVID-19 pandemic, while highlighting opportunities for important engagement partnerships, including the 2020 Census.

County staff created a formal translation process and designated a staff liaison to ensure a centralized system for translations and quality assurance. *(Continues on the next page).*



### *Public Engagement Continued from page 44*

This process has reinforced the County's use of translations to create more equitable and accessible information. Staff have also created simple and clear messaging, in the form of videos with graphics, to share with members of the County's limited-English proficiency community.

In addition, County programs during the year placed more than 17,000 door hangers and magnets in several languages throughout the community, implemented the use of QR (Quick Response) codes for easy access to information through cell phones and have been offering texting, call-in options, and social distanced pop-ups to allow people to engage with Arlington County Government in new ways.

The lessons learned through the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to strengthen the County's outreach and engagement efforts moving forward. By continuing to apply an equity lens to the participatory process, finding creative new engagement tools, and partnering with dozens of trusted community leaders, the County is prepared and ready to conduct engagement and outreach safely and successfully with the community in the future.

### Interpretive Signs Mark Green Valley History

The Green Valley--Dr. Charles R. Drew Elementary Interpretive Sign Panels project featured the installation of five interpretive markers that share photos and stories of the neighborhood's history. The signs replaced the temporary signage on the John Robinson, Jr. Town Square (formerly the Nauck Town Square) and placed them on the walkway that connects the school with the heart of the neighborhood.



*One of Five Green Valley--Dr. Charles R. Drew Elementary Interpretive Sign Panels.*

The signs were refabricated and updated to reflect the change of the neighborhood's name from Nauck to Green Valley and to reflect the name change from Drew Model School to Dr. Charles R. Drew Elementary School.

This project is also part of the first leg of a proposed history and heritage walk that will connect various sites of community importance together. This initial segment will provide the students and teachers at Arlington Public Schools in addition to the broader community information on the neighborhood's rich history and heritage.

### 2020 Neighborhood College, a Virtual Experience

[Neighborhood College](#) offered two cohort sessions in 2020 with 42 students completing the course. Notably, due to the pandemic both classes met virtually for each session.

In each class, made up of participants from 19 County neighborhoods, participants addressed leadership styles and skills building; accessing and collaborating with the County; and community organizing, engagement and advocacy. Now the graduates must volunteer 10 hours of their time in Arlington County within six months of completing the program.

The program seeks current and emerging grassroots neighborhood leaders who want to improve their communities, are interested in addressing local issues and are willing to devote time and energy to community activities.



## 2020 General Election Registered Voter Turnout Near Record Setting

The 2020 General Election on Nov. 3 attracted Arlington's second largest percentage of registered voters in its history.

In fact, a week before officials reported that more than 105,000 Arlingtonians had already cast their ballot by mail and in person—representing a 63% turnout.



The [final tally](#) showed that 131,518 voters, or about 79% of Arlington's 166,416 registered voters, cast ballots, just short of the 2016, turnout of 82% (122,023 of 148,032 registered voters).

Absentee turnout this year was record-breaking, with more than 108,394 Arlingtonians (65.1%) casting their ballots by mail, drop box, or in person before Election Day. As anticipated due to the COVID-19 pandemic and expected record turnout, more people than ever before voted by mail in Arlington (29%). As a result, turnout on Election Day itself remained light with only 23,124 people voting (14%).

County election officials received no reports of significant technical issues. More than 750 election officers and nearly 100 high school students staffed polling places and the County's Central Absentee Precinct.



The result saw voters bringing back Libby Garvey to office and approving [bond referenda](#) to raise up to \$145 million in capital investments for Metro and transportation local parks and recreation, community infrastructure, stormwater, and Arlington Public Schools.

## Community Service-- a Part of Arlington Firefighters Mission

The COVID-19 pandemic temporarily closed Arlington's fire stations to the public, but the department continued to be active servants to the community.

In April, crews joined up with the Police Department and took part in an appreciation event for the hardworking staff at Virginia Hospital Center and in July, the ACFD kicked off a summer [Coats for Kids drive](#) collecting winter wear for the neediest members of the community.



Firefighters also made generous donations to the Arlington Food Assistance Center when supplies began to run low due to the pandemic.

In August, the department held the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Operation FirePaws donation drive that helped the Animal Welfare League of Arlington raise over \$1,000 to purchase supplies for adoptable animals.

In September, units from Station 2 (Ballston) participated in a drive by birthday salute for a new centenarian at the Jefferson retirement home, one of many socially distanced community events that included participation of Arlington firefighters.

## Donation Received from One of Arlington's Oldest Black Churches

On February 9, 2020, Arlington's [Lomax A.M.E. Zion Church](#) and the County's [Center for Local History](#) (CLH) celebrated the donation of the Church's archival records to the Center's Community Archives. The donation included a large 19th century pulpit bible, printed in 1856.



***19th Century Bible Donated as part of the Lomax Church Collection.***

The CLH worked with the Lomax Church Archives Committee and its Chairwoman, Brenda Cox, to prepare and move materials for the acquisition. The donation was years in the making and both the CLH and the church's Archives Committee spent countless hours to facilitate the exchange of materials. Now, members of the community and beyond can [research and discover](#) more about the history of one of Arlington's oldest African-American churches.

The CLH, which is located at Central Library at 1015 N. Quincy St., collects, preserves, and shares historical documents that narrate the history of Arlington County, its citizens, organizations, and businesses.

## Honoring Arlington's Women's History

The exhibition "[Women's Work: Then & Now](#)," launched in early March at Central Library, commemorated both Arlington County's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the 100 years since the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment.



Included in the exhibition were stories, photographs, letters, and memorabilia, which spotlight individuals and groups of Arlington women who dedicated their work to improve their community and the lives of others.

The selected honorees were groundbreaking, visionary women who made ongoing contributions to the communities they serve. The exhibition also featured women from the Center for Local History's online exhibition, [Women's Work: Stories of Persistence and Influence](#).

The Arlington women profiled in the exhibit included Anna Barber, Charlene Bickford, Ellen Bozman, Judith Brewer, Elizabeth Campbell, Gertrude Crocker, Pauline Haislip Duncan, Alice Fleet, Alice Foster, Sandra Green, Critchett Hodukavich, Seema Jain and Carolyn (Carrie) Johnson.

Other women featured in the exhibit were Cintia Johnson, Dr. Phoebe Hall Knipling, Puwen Lee, Marguerete Luter, Mary A. R. Marshall, Sushmita Mazumdar, Ruby Lee Minar, Constance (Connie) Ramirez, Caroline Gary Romano, Cornelia Bruere Rose, Jr., Virginia Lillis Smith, Florence Starzynski, Margarite Syphax, Nancy Tate, Marjorie Varner, and Dr. Emma Violand-Sanchez.

The [Center for Local History's](#) Community Archives contains many collections pertaining to women's history, and the history of Arlington County. The women were involved in a range of community activities from helping to establish Arlington's first hospital to fighting for civil rights. They served in local government and politics and all forms of civic life. Their contributions helped make Arlington what it is today.

## “Quaranzine” Documenting Community Life During Social Isolation

Since its inception in mid-March, Arlington Public Library’s civic engagement project “[Quaranzine](#)” has built a new model for documenting and archiving community life during social isolation.

[Quaranzine](#) is an online publication of local art and writing by the Arlington community, distributed through the Library’s website.



*A Sample of the Offerings Found in the Quaranzine Online Publication.*

It has received hundreds of submissions and serves as an exhibition space for creative works during, and in reaction to, the global pandemic.

The publication is broad by design and has drawn a wide variety of content ranging from personal reflection, reflections on Black Lives Matters, humor and hope.

Quaranzine has inspired other cultural institutions in the United States and abroad to develop similar models in their own communities.

## Library Offers Free Reading Program, Eliminates Fines

During the year, Arlington Public Library launched [MyBook](#)- a free reading initiative for Arlington Public School students in kindergarten through second grade. The intent of MyBook to help families give their students the tools and support for a successful start in the early years of education. It focuses on vocabulary, grammar, and language skills.

[MyBook](#) is a partnership between the Arlington Public Library, the County Council of PTAs, the Arlington Free Clinic, the Arlington Partnership for Children Youth and Family, Arlington Public Schools, and the Friends of the Arlington Public Library.

Additionally, on July 1, Arlington Public Library [eliminated overdue fines](#) to make the library’s collections accessible to all library patrons. The goal is to increase access to and minimize barriers for marginalized populations to use the library, particularly for youth and low-income patrons.

## Arlington Reads Moves Online

In response to COVID-19, Arlington Public Library moved many of its popular programs online, which included its signature author series “[Arlington Reads](#).”

With its new format, Library Director Diane Kresh interviewed a diverse line-up of authors about their work (from a distance) including Alexis Coe, Rachel Louise Snyder, David Brooks, Elaine Weiss, and Colson Whitehead, and addressed some of the most pressing issues of our time: Black Lives Matter, displacement and housing, policing, and civic engagement.

A highlight was Kresh’s conversation with author and [New York Times](#) columnist [David Brooks](#) about building connections in communities and weaving a rich social fabric.



Brooks is the founder of the Aspen Institute's "Weave: The Social Fabric Project," aimed at bridging the differences that divide Americans by replacing loneliness, division and distrust with relationship, community, and purpose.

Since its inception in 2006, Arlington Reads has featured both national and international fiction and nonfiction authors and cultural icons.



## CAPITAL PROGRAM

**A**rlington's Capital Program includes new construction and the expansion, renovation, or replacement existing facilities. Despite the challenges of 2020, the program continued to push forward completing several park projects, making infrastructure improvements, and maintaining County facilities.

### Capital Park Projects

During 2020, the County completed construction of eight major capital park projects:

#### Completed Projects

**The Barcroft Park** Diamond Stadium Field Synthetic Turf Replacement, 4250 S. Four Mile Run Drive: This was a Synthetic Turf Program project partly funded by George Washington University. It involved replacement of the synthetic turf on the diamond field, the warning track synthetic turf, renovation of the clay infield, repairs to the sub-surface and installation of GWU's logo in the turf. The field was back in service in late spring 2020.

**Madison Manor Park**, 6225 12<sup>th</sup> Road N.: A Parks Maintenance Capital Program project, this work included demolition, site work, installation of a new basketball court, playground, athletic field, picnic shelter, parking, site circulation, site furnishings, stormwater management improvements and landscaping. The park reopened summer 2020.

**Gunston Park** Rectangular Field Synthetic Turf Replacement, 1401 28<sup>th</sup> St. S.: Funded by the Synthetic Turf Program and APS, this project corrected drainage issues and replaced the synthetic turf on the rectangular field at Gunston Park. The Gunston Middle School, recreation leagues, and the community all use the field for organized or for drop-in play. The field reopened to use late summer 2020.

**Mosaic Park**, 544 N. Pollard St.: A developer's contribution funded the first phase of the park's construction. The project included urban and casual plazas, an interactive water feature, a children's play area, synthetic multi-purpose court, site furnishings, landscaping, lighting, fencing, drainage improvements and more. The new park opened early fall 2020.



*Mosaic Park Includes Urban and Casual Plazas, an Interactive Water Feature, a Children's Play Area and More.*

**Bluemont Junction Trail:** This project, funded by the Trail Modernization Program, involved repaving the main section of the Bluemont Junction Trail from the intersection of the Washington and Old Dominion Trail to the street crossing at Wilson Boulevard and North George Mason Drive. The trail opened late fall 2020.

**Lubber Run Park Pedestrian Bridge** Replacement, 200 N. Columbus St.: This Parks Maintenance Capital project replaced the pedestrian bridge with a new prefabricated structure, trail milling and repaving, site amenities and stormwater improvements. The new bridge opened in late spring 2020. It was one of the three Lubber Run bridges destroyed in the July 2018 flooding event.

**Benjamin Banneker Park**, 1680 N. Sycamore St.: Completed in late 2020, the County replaced and upgraded all facilities within the park including the parking lot, picnic area, playground, walkways, and landscaping. It also improved the stormwater management system and the rectangular athletic field and renovated the dog park.



## Major Park Projects Advancing

**Long Bridge Park Aquatics & Fitness Center**, 333 Long Bridge Drive: Construction of the Long Bridge Park Aquatics & Fitness Center and 10.5-acre park continued with the project nearing completion at the end of 2020.

The Aquatics & Fitness Center building features a 50-meter competitive pool with 5-meter, 3-meter and 1-meter diving; a leisure pool with a tube slide, lazy river and learn to swim and fitness areas and community rooms.

Projections call for completion of the outdoor amenities in late 2020 and open for use. Staff anticipates full completion of the facility in spring 2021 and open to the public later that summer.

**Jennie Dean Park**, 3630 27<sup>th</sup> Street South: In 2019, the County awarded a contract for completing the design and building of the first phase of improvements at Jennie Dean Park.

The project includes, but not limited to, lighted diamond fields, tennis and basketball courts, playgrounds, stormwater management, parking, public art, and historic interpretation elements. Construction began in fall 2020 and staff expects completion of the project by fall 2021.

**Zitkala-Ša Park (formerly known as Henry Clay Park)**, 3011 7<sup>th</sup> St. N.: This Parks Maintenance Capital project will improve all park amenities and included reconstruction of the basketball court, playground, picnic

shelter, site circulation, site furnishings, fencing, stormwater management improvements and landscaping. County officials anticipate completion of the work later this year. The County Board approved renaming the park in December as proposed by the Lyon Park Civic Association.

**Rosslyn Highlands Park**, 1579 Wilson Blvd.: Staff anticipates construction of this park to begin summer 2021 and conclude by early 2022. When completed, it will provide the community a variety of elements, including a lighted multi-purpose court.

**Rosslyn Highlands Park Playground**, 1615 18<sup>th</sup> St. N.: The County Board awarded a construction contract at their November 2020 meeting for this playground located at the Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing site at Queens Court. The County obtained the park property and partial funding via the site plan process. Other funding was set aside in the County's Park Master Plan CIP program. Plans call for construction to start early 2021.



ROSSLYN HIGHLANDS PLAYGROUND

**Glencarlyn Park Bridge Replacement**, 301 S. Harrison St.: Heavy rains and flooding in July 2019 destroyed the original bridge. The County began design of the new structure in fall 2020 using funding from the Trail and Bridge Modernization Program and expects to begin construction of the structure in summer 2021 with a winter completion.

**Gunston Park, Bubble Replacement**, 1401 28<sup>th</sup> Street S. The County awarded a contract for replacing the structure late fall 2020. The new bubble, upon completion, will have a metal frame and canvas cover to enclose the indoor synthetic turf field and provide better air circulation. Staff projects an early 2021 construction date with completion by spring 2021.

**John Robinson, Jr. Town Square (formerly known as Nauck Town Square)**, 2400 Shirlington Road: In May 2019, the County Board awarded a \$4.85 million construction contract for park improvements, utility undergrounding, street improvements, landscaping, site circulation, signage, and stormwater management improvements. Crews began construction summer 2019 and anticipates finishing the work in 2021. In November, at the request of the Green Valley Civic Association the Board endorsed renaming the site the John Robinson, Jr. Town Square.

## Neighborhood Conservation Projects

This calendar year, the [Neighborhood Conservation Program](#) completed nearly \$9.4 million in projects. Here are some of the highlights.

[Arlington Boulevard Trail](#) (from South Irving Street to South Fillmore Street): This project, completed in Spring 2020, created an accessible and continuous 10-foot-wide trail (or shared-use path) along the south side of Arlington Boulevard from west of South Irving Street to South Fillmore Street in the Arlington Heights neighborhood.

The trail improvement included filling out an existing 8-foot-wide trail and building additional stretches at some blocks to maintain trail continuity. The intersections along Arlington Boulevard, including those at South Hudson Street, South Highland Street, South Garfield Street and South Fenwick Street, received with new curb and gutter and ADA-compliant curb ramps.

The project's total length is approximately 1,500 feet. Much of the work took place within VDOT right-of-way. The County collaborated with the state during design.



*Arlington Boulevard Trail from South Irving Street to South Fillmore Street (Before).*



*Arlington Boulevard Trail from South Irving Street to South Fillmore Street (After).*

[20th Road North Pedestrian Safety and Street Improvement Project](#) in Waverly Hills: The primary goal of the 20<sup>th</sup> Road North pedestrian safety and street improvement project was to design and complete the missing sections of concrete sidewalk between 2036 N. Utah St. (west side of street) and 4429 20th Road N. (the north side of street). The design needed to adjust for grade changes at each property, requiring the installation of seven contiguous retaining walls. The installation of the sidewalk also gives pedestrians safe access to Lee Highway. Improvements also included upgrades to storm and drainage pipes.

[New Paved, Multi-User Pathway in Barcroft](#): The goals for this project included providing a paved, multi-user pathway from the end of 7<sup>th</sup> Street South to connect with the W&OD Trail, accommodating Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, addressing storm water and drainage issues, removing, and treating invasive plants and preserving two existing holly trees. The work included reducing the length of the existing guardrail to accommodate a new accessible entrance and replacing the existing drainage structures.

[Edison Park, 213 N Edison St., Renovation](#) in Arlington Forest: This park project involved replacing the existing play area; installing new furniture and fencing, ramps, railings, and walls to improve accessibility from the street and to the park trail; planting native plants and improving the park's stormwater management. It reopened the end of 2020.

## County Facility Improvements

An important component of the County's Capital Program is the maintenance and improvement of County facilities.

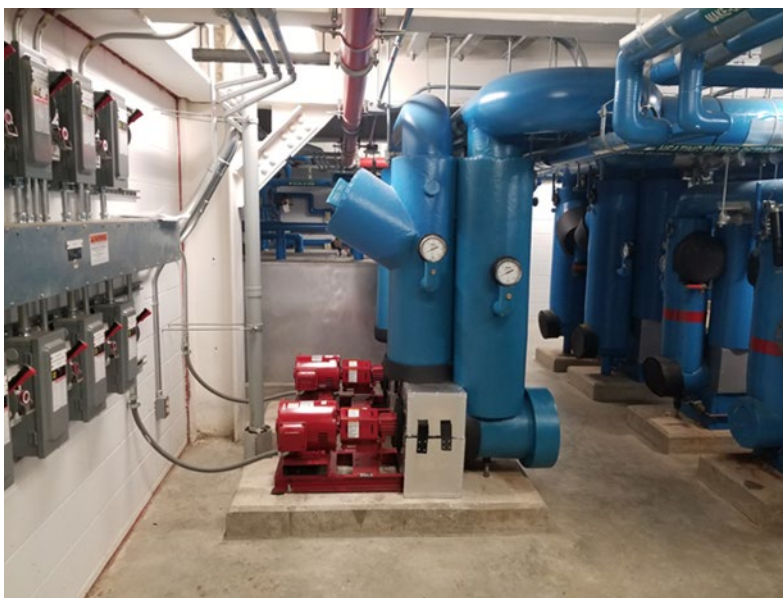
In 2020, the County made progress on the replacement of the Lubber Run Community Center, completed upgrades at County buildings, including the Water Pollution Control Plant, the Bozman Government Center, and much more.

[The New Lubber Run Community Center](#), 300 N. Park Drive, is a 53,000 square foot multi-level, state-of-the-art facility. It contains a gymnasium, multipurpose rooms, program areas including a pre-school, and office space for recreation staff moving from the Cultural Affairs Building at 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. Construction is complete, as the County delivered the project on time and on budget. But due to the need to redirect funds to address the pandemic, the building is not slated to open until fiscal year 2022. Visitors have been able to enjoy the outdoor park since September, however. The total project budget was \$49 million.

[The Water Pollution Control Plant](#), 3402 S. Glebe Road, is one of the County's largest facilities. It received two major equipment upgrades during the year. The first involved replacement of the outdated electrical system in the plant's Motor Control Center (MCC), its primary treatment building. This equipment powers the first set of treatment processes that focus on removing debris from wastewater. Completed in

October, the new equipment allows staff to better monitor power usage and automatically switch between the plant's two power sources, minimizing equipment downtime during outages. The MCC now has improved safety features that better protect plant electricians during maintenance and testing activities.

The second project resulted in the replacement of the plant's underground hot water recirculation loop with an overhead crossing for ease of access and maintenance. Before, the plant's preliminary treatment building did not have a hot water line for several years and during winter months, the lack of heating in the process areas led to dangerous ice formations that damaged treatment equipment.



*New Hot Water Piping at the Water Pollution Control Plant.*

[The County's Head Start program](#) moved to its new location at 2920 S. Glebe Road last June. As part of the program's relocation, the County made several property enhancements including sidewalk, curb, gutter, ADA and safety improvements along South Lang Street and Glebe Road. Crews completed the work in September. The cost was \$6.3 million.

[At Fire Station No. 6](#), 6950 Little Falls Road, the County replaced the station's existing air handlers with new HVAC equipment, and installed infrared heaters in the apparatus bays. The new system provides code-required ventilation and temperatures for the space. All of the new equipment is high-efficiency and connected to the building automation system. The \$1.5 million project wrapped up in September.

[The Detention Facility](#), 1435 N. Courthouse Road, is set for replacement of its air handlers with new HVAC equipment, which will provide the code-required ventilation and temperatures for the facility. The project was set for construction beginning in December with a budget of \$590,000.



[The Bozman Government Center](#), at 2100 Clarendon Blvd., is the County's main administrative building. During 2020, the County completed several improvements in the building as part of a five-year, \$3.9 million furniture, fixtures and equipment renovation project funded by a JBG tenant improvement budget.

This included a refresh of all the building's conference rooms, creation of collaborative and flexible workspaces, and installation of sit-stand desks and new chairs for staff.



*The Bozman Government Center at 2100 Clarendon Blvd.*

It also included an upgrade of 10th floor, home of the [Permit Office](#), that featured constructing new walls and doors to separate and secure public and staff spaces to provide a safer work environment for employees on a floor meant to be open to the public. The construction concluded in February with a total budget of \$120,000.

The second and third floors also received several upgrades. On the second floor, the [Commissioner of Revenue](#) and [Treasurer's](#) offices received new ADA accessible counters that increased accessibility within the facility. The project completed in March cost \$160,000.

Renovation of the third floor created a joint reception area for both the [County Manager](#) and [County Board Office](#) and new conference rooms, installation of a pantry, open office concept cubicle spaces and new finishes throughout. The project, completed in July, cost \$710,000.

To increase the building's safety, the County installed a new security system that expanded access control throughout the building with the installation of over 100 additional card reader stations throughout the facility, increasing protection for employees. The work finished in in

August at a total cost of \$500,000. Finally, to expand access to the building, the County launched expansion of the 2200 Clarendon Blvd. elevator access to the 2100 common areas on select floors. Staff expects the \$170,000 project to take six months.

[The Court Square West](#) office building, 1400 N. Uhle St., had its boiler, two chillers and three pumps replaced. All the equipment is high-efficiency and connected to the building's automation system. While construction was still in progress at the time of this report, County staff expects completion by March 2021 for a total budget of \$715,000.

[The County's Justice Center](#), at 1425 N. Courthouse Road, that houses the Courts and Police Department, received new door frames and storefront areas, while adding additional ADA door systems at the detention facility, courts, and police entrances. The building also gained new refinished brass doors, all for a total budget of \$500,000.



*The Justice Center Updated Entrance.*



## In Partnership with Arlington Public Schools

The County and Arlington Public Schools, (APS) are both dedicated to providing quality services for Arlington students. Their combined response to the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that the partnership enjoyed by the two entities provides a structure that allows for serving the whole child and family beyond the classroom.

As mentioned earlier, the collaboration this year included the County providing over \$10 million in additional funding to support APS' pandemic-related health and safety costs, joining together to provide food for families, and the distribution of COVID-19-kits with referral information to County services and face covering kits for students and their families. In addition, County library staff are currently providing technical support for persistent technology issues to Arlington Public School students, parents, and staff through a family technology call center. Library staff also developed public service announcements and conducted outreach in support of the initiative to provide free home broadband services to APS families.

Beyond collaborating to respond to the pandemic, the County and schools continued to work together to address other issues and needs. What follows are two examples of those efforts.

## Career Center Expansion Approved

In July, APS received County Board approval to amend its use permit for the [Arlington Career Center](#) (ACC), at 816 S. Walter Reed Drive. With the amendment, the school system can perform interior renovations on the building to support growing enrollment of the Arlington Tech Program, a project-based learning high school program.

The construction will remodel both floors of the existing [Columbia Pike Branch Library](#), with the second floor converted to classroom space for APS use during school hours and County use outside school hours. When completed, the total ACC building capacity will increase from 800 seats to 950 seats.



*Inside the Arlington Career Center.*

Plans call for consolidating the library's functions to the first floor, and updating it with new technology, furniture, and equipment. While waiting for the start of construction, the library closed.

After the renovation, the branch will re-open offering the same quality of services on the first floor, including programming, access to collections and meeting rooms.

APS delayed the timeline for the work due to uncertainties due to COVID-19.

## County Data Used to Shape Student Enrollment Projections

For the fourth consecutive year, the County shared housing and birth data with Schools for student enrollment projections. In September, the County's Research and Strategic Initiatives Group (RSIG) provided APS several data sets to help determining projections. These included the master housing unit database, housing unit forecast, 2019 actual births, and birth projections. The County also provided data on Single Family Housing Under Construction and Approved Accessory Dwelling Units.

County and schools' demographers continue to collaborate throughout the year. These discussions on available data and current population trends leads to the refinement of the data sharing procedures/process.

## Program Growth, Enhancements

Arlington County employees continually strive to provide quality services. They also seek to improve or grow programs and service delivery models to better serve the changing needs of the community.

The year of 2020 proved no different. Although the pandemic led to some improvements others resulted from a desire to resolve long-standing problems or to identify new ways to enhance current programs.

### Neighborhood Conservation Program Review Nears Completion

The [Neighborhood Conservation \(NC\) Program](#) has a history stretching 50 years. During 2020, the County with the aid of a dedicated group of resident volunteers moved closer to completing the program's first major [review](#) in its history and will deliver a final report in January 2021.

The County launched the study to assess the program's efficacy, focusing on how it may best deliver community infrastructure in the most efficient, cost-effective, equitable and timely manner possible. The review also considered the civic engagement and community capital-building benefits of the program.

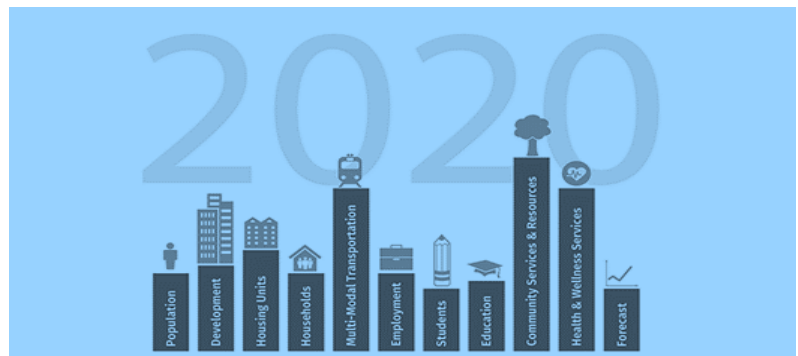


Key objectives of the review include informing improvements to the NC and future capital improvement programs, County organizational decisions, and program policies.

Along the way, the working group identified the program's key strengths and specific program challenges, which they will address in their report. They also learned that during the past three decades, the program has invested more than \$100 million in more than 500 community infrastructure projects across Arlington.

### Profile 2020—Arlington's Demographics Factbook— Released

In July, the County released [Profile 2020](#), Arlington's official statistical factbook. Produced since 1982, readers use the Profile to gain an understanding of community; for planning future services and needs; to guide policy decisions; and to secure grant funding.



The document provides a wide range of data for several topic areas such as population, housing, households, employment, development, schools and education, multi-modal transportation, community services and resources, health, and wellness services, and a forecast.

Profile 2020 also includes Arlington Public Library statistics, highlighting the number of library programs, services, and constituents served. Its importance is even greater as it provides a baseline to measure any changes that have occurred since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to the Profile 2020 report, an interactive [Planning Corridors](#) visualization tool is available online and supports the comparison of demographics across the Rosslyn-Ballston, Richmond Highway and Columbia Pike corridors. This edition of the Profile and previous versions are accessible at [arlingtonva.us/profile](http://arlingtonva.us/profile).

## Office of Human Right Enhances Systems, Procedures

The [Office of Human Rights \(OHR\)](#) helps resolve complaints of alleged discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, private education, commercial real-estate, access to County programs or services and monitors affirmative action practices for County employees.

In 2020, the office contracted with a third-party consultant to conduct the County's first-ever traditional barrier analysis. The study commenced in January and is a one-year project designed to identify any barriers to equal opportunity in County employment.



OHR also implemented changes to the County's Affirmative Action Plan (AAP) development process after an internal review revealed the need for long overdue process improvements; and hired a Society of Human Resource Management recommended vendor to create the County's Plan.

Human Rights staff provided significant edits for the Administrative Regulation and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy updates to make both more robust. In tandem, it overhauled its internal employee EEO training to make it consistent with best practices, interactive and virtually deliverable while also updating its website to offer additional resources, information, and easier navigability.

Internally, OHR created a new system to track investigations and accommodations-related metrics, effectively replacing an obsolete system at no cost; and continued to improve and streamline investigative and accommodations processes, conducting 60 investigations and facilitating 56 accommodation requests while also delivering new employee EEO training twice a month.

To help managers and Human Resources (HR) liaisons with pandemic-related accommodations guidance, OHR established the first cross-departmental, county-wide Accommodations Work Group comprised of HR liaisons, HR analysts, OHR representatives and the County Attorney's Office. In its capacity as Fair Employment Practices Agency and per its agreement with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), OHR also held one outreach forum in conjunction with the EEOC, "EEO Laws and "Covid-19." Further, OHR and the Human Rights Commission jointly held the annual Tiffany Joslyn Human Rights Forum in a virtual format this year.

## Water Leak Program Expanded

The Utility Services Office this year updated the [County's leak investigation program](#) to help improve residents' plumbing maintenance and water conservation.



In the last fiscal year, the office responded to more than 650 customer requests for a high-use water investigation.

The [new process](#) involves a County staffer performing an outside inspection to rule out water main/pipe-to-home leaks. County staff also provide property owners information on how to find potential issues inside the home, like leaky bathroom fixtures.

## Updated Construction Standards Released

In September, the County's Engineering Bureau released an update to the County's set of engineering standards, known as "[Construction Specifications and Construction Standard Details.](#)"

This update, developed with assistance of the Department of Parks & Recreation, provides a more condensed and easier-to-interpret document with new content for general requirements, site work and exterior improvements.

## Police Expands Online Reporting System

This summer, the Police Department announced expansion of its [online police reporting system](#) with additional capabilities.



The changes build upon the County's comprehensive effort to improve service delivery through its website and online platforms to better meet the needs of constituents.

The added features include three new crash reporting items, and the capability to report all incidences in Spanish or English.

## Parks & Recreation Digital Footprint Growing

More and more people are turning to the [Department of Parks & Recreation's](#) digital platform for information.

The program's website had again close to 2 million views this year.

Both Facebook and Twitter fans grew by almost 10% and eNews subscribers to its 30 targeted lists grew from 118,609 in 2019 to 126,576 in 2020.

## New Navigation Tool Generates Customized Bike Routes

Not knowing what routes are safe for riding a bicycle is a common barrier to biking. Recognizing this, the [Bike Arlington](#) program launched the [Customized Routes Tool](#), an online request service for people who need help navigating Arlington by bike.

According to the program's website, the tool "combines the best of modern and classic customer service. It's an online request form that collects an individual's information in a standardized and easy way," and the Bike Arlington Team creates each route by hand to best suit the individual's needs.



### *The County Now Offers Customized Routes for Bicyclists.*

Then staff emails the route back to the person as a map and with GPS directions – plus an overview of the route and guidance if there are any tricky spots.

Employees have created over 230 routes since January. To gain an understanding of the needs of the people who requested the service, the program turned to the [Mobility Lab](#), a research and communications center associated with the County's transportation programs, to look for trends and patterns.

The results showed that in the first six months of the program, that most requestors, 60%, found trails more comfortable; a significant number, 11%, said that in a typical month they never bike for transportation or for leisure or exercise; and about 20% perceived biking to be safer than their usual travel mode.

In addition, 15% were interested in a route for a new commute, 19% were returning to biking after a long break and 15% needed help navigating through trick spots or gaps in the bike network.



## Site Plan Review Engagement Process Goes Cyber

Arlington requires major private and public projects to progress through a [site plan review process](#) before being submitted to the County Board for approval. The process ensures proper County commission and advisory board reviews, public engagement and compliance with all applicable policies and ordinances.



With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, a multi-disciplined Department of Community Planning Housing and Development work team designed a pilot project that allowed the continuation of the [Site Plan Review Committee \(SPRC\) process](#) online, replacing in-person meetings and avoiding disruptions.

Specifically, staff created additional content for each site plan project's webpage and transitioned to online engagement sessions, including narrated presentations and comment submission forms, and virtual meetings. The process proved to be very successful, allowing the County to engage a broader segment of the Arlington community than typically during pre- pandemic times.

## Housing Choice Voucher Program Implements Electronic Application Process

The [Housing Choice Voucher Program](#) (HCVP) provides federally funded rental assistance subsidies to low-income households, seniors, and persons with disabilities. In July, the Housing Assistance Bureau opened the program's waiting list for the first time since 2012. In preparation of opening the list, the County amended the program's Administrative Plan to include necessary policy updates. Those changes included:

- **Eliminating the paper application process.** Thanks to a new online application system – Rent Café – applicants can apply to the HCVP waiting list on any device with internet access, with reasonable accommodations provided.
- **Ending the “first come, first served” acceptance process.** The waiting list was open for a longer amount of time to remove the community panic factor of being the first in line to apply, which also was a benefit as social distancing concerns emerged in the community.

- **Implementing a lottery system.** The County randomly selected roughly 3,000 new applications via the online application system for a position on the waiting list. The list includes existing applicants from the 2012 waitlist.

## Telehealth Arrives, New Programs Operational

At the onset of the pandemic, the County's Behavioral Healthcare Division, which serves adults who have mental health and substance use treatment needs, quickly adopted telehealth options for therapy and case management. This practice holds promise to be useful in the post-COVID era. Additionally, the division made strides on two innovative new programs in 2020:

**On-Site Pharmacy:** The County completed the buildout of an on-site pharmacy to serve DHS clients and community members. The on-site pharmacy provides an advantage for clients from a coordinated care viewpoint and increases medication adherence. The pharmacy offers a delivery and curbside pickup service.

**Behavioral Health Docket:** The state approved Arlington's Behavioral Health Docket (BHD) and County staff have started to receive referrals. The program aims to divert eligible defendants with diagnosed mental health disorders into judicially supervised, community-based treatment, designed and implemented by a team of court staff and mental health professionals.

## Awards & Honors

The County's reputation as a high functioning, progressive and creative organization is highly valued by County employees and residents. Reinforcing its standing both locally and nationally is the number of awards and honors the County receives each year for its programs and services. The following is a sampling of the honors received in 2020.

### Arlington Park System Ranked Among the Top Nationally

In May, the [Trust for Public Land](#) ranked the Arlington park system among the top programs in the nation's 100 largest cities.

According to the organization's [ParkScore®](#) the County is fourth best in the country in terms of park access and quality. The twin cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul, MN ranked first and third respectively while neighboring Washington, D.C. placed second.

Arlington earned top marks for its park investment, earning perfect scores for its dog parks and basketball courts.

While the county is one of the smallest of the top 10 cities ranked, it inched up its park access score from 98% to 99%, meaning 99% of Arlington residents are within a 10-minute walk to a park – that equates to an increase of more than 5,000 residents.

## Cultural Affairs Receives Arts Grant

In June, the County Board approved acceptance and appropriation of a \$35,000 [National Endowment for the Arts \(NEA\)](#) Art Works award for [Arlington Cultural Affairs](#). The award was a portion of the more than \$84 million in grants recently approved as part of the NEA's second major funding announcement for fiscal year 2020.

Cultural Affairs will use the grant to support a multi-cultural artist residency project serving the Arlington Columbia Hills and Columbia Grove affordable housing complexes. In partnership with Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH), the program will select an artist to develop participatory arts activities for diverse resident populations, including Arabic, Amharic, Spanish, and English speakers. Activities will culminate in the creation of community-generated public art.

### Historic Preservation Program, Review Board Recognized for Clarendon War Memorial Project

In August, the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC) awarded the County's [Historic Preservation Program](#) and Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB) a Commission Excellence Award for the 11 [Clarendon War Memorial historic markers](#) that were dedicated Nov. 11, 2019. ([Watch the video.](#))



*The Clarendon War Memorial Historic Markers.*

The NAPC's Commission Excellence Awards recognizes and honors outstanding efforts and achievements by local historic preservation commissions and boards of architectural review.

The interpretive project was a collaborative effort of the County, the HALRB, the County's World War I Commemoration Task Force, Arlington's veterans, and numerous community stakeholders.

## Arlington Named Top Digital County for 4<sup>th</sup> Consecutive Year

In September, the Center for Digital Government and National Association of Counties named Arlington the 2020 No. 1 Digital County in the U.S. This marks the fourth time Arlington has received the top spot for its 150,000-249,999-population category.

Arlington received the award based on an extensive assessment of its activities, governance and [digital strategy](#) leading up to the COVID-19 pandemic. The County's approach to digitizing services, increased scalability, and security, along with a focus on resiliency and digital equity allowed it to respond to this year's needs and ensure a seamless continuation of government operations quickly and effectively.

Arlington won the 2020 top ranking for its work in several areas: open government, strategic planning, public engagement, cyber security, collaboration, shared services, operations, staffing and resiliency. Also considered was how progress in these technology areas helped support the County's overall priorities and goals for the year.

## Department of Parks & Recreation Wins State Honors

In October, the Virginia Recreation and Park Society honored the Department of Parks and Recreation with [three awards](#) for populations greater than 200,000.

The department received the society's Best New Environmental Sustainability award for the Reforested Floodplain of [Bon Air Park](#), the Best New Renovation/Addition, Parks, Playgrounds, Blueways, Greenways and Trail honor for the [Powhatan Springs Skate Park](#), and the Distinguished Service Award for staffer Robin Leonard for her work in the department.



*The Virginia Recreation and Park Society Recognized Powhatan Springs Skate Park in 2020 as the Best New Renovation.*

## Arlington Economic Development Honored on the International Stage

In October, the Arlington Economic Development took home numerous honors at the [International Economic Development Council 2020 Excellence Awards](#) ceremony.



The department received gold [awards](#) for three projects: Amazon HQ2 — Regionalism and Cross-Border Collaboration; Arlington Premiere — Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Initiatives and the Gazelle Grant Program — Creative Financing.

It garnered a silver award for the Arlington Small Business Emergency GRANT Program — Resiliency, Recovery and Mitigation, and a bronze honor for its Innovations in Healthy Aging Startup Competition — Economic Equity and Inclusion.

These awards honor the world's best economic development marketing campaigns, projects and programs, and the year's most influential leaders. Thirty-five award categories honor organizations and individuals for their efforts in creating positive change in urban, suburban, and rural communities.